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ABSTRACT

This document presents the 1996 Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) standards based on current knowledge, children's developmental needs, and tested ways of meeting these needs most effectively. The standards are intended to provide goals for improving services to children and families and are used in the development of the standards of the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children, Inc. (COA). Following a section describing how to use the CWLA standards, the guide differentiates the CWLA standards, COA standards for accreditation, and state and provincial licensing. The introduction presents a historical perspective on child welfare services. The chapters are: (1) "Core Values"; (2) "Organizational Establishment, Governance, and Administration"; (3) "Human Resources"; and (4) "Business Management, Marketing, and Resource Development." Appended is the National Society of Fund Raising Executives Code of Ethical Principles and Standards of Professional Practice. (Contains 50 references.) (KB)

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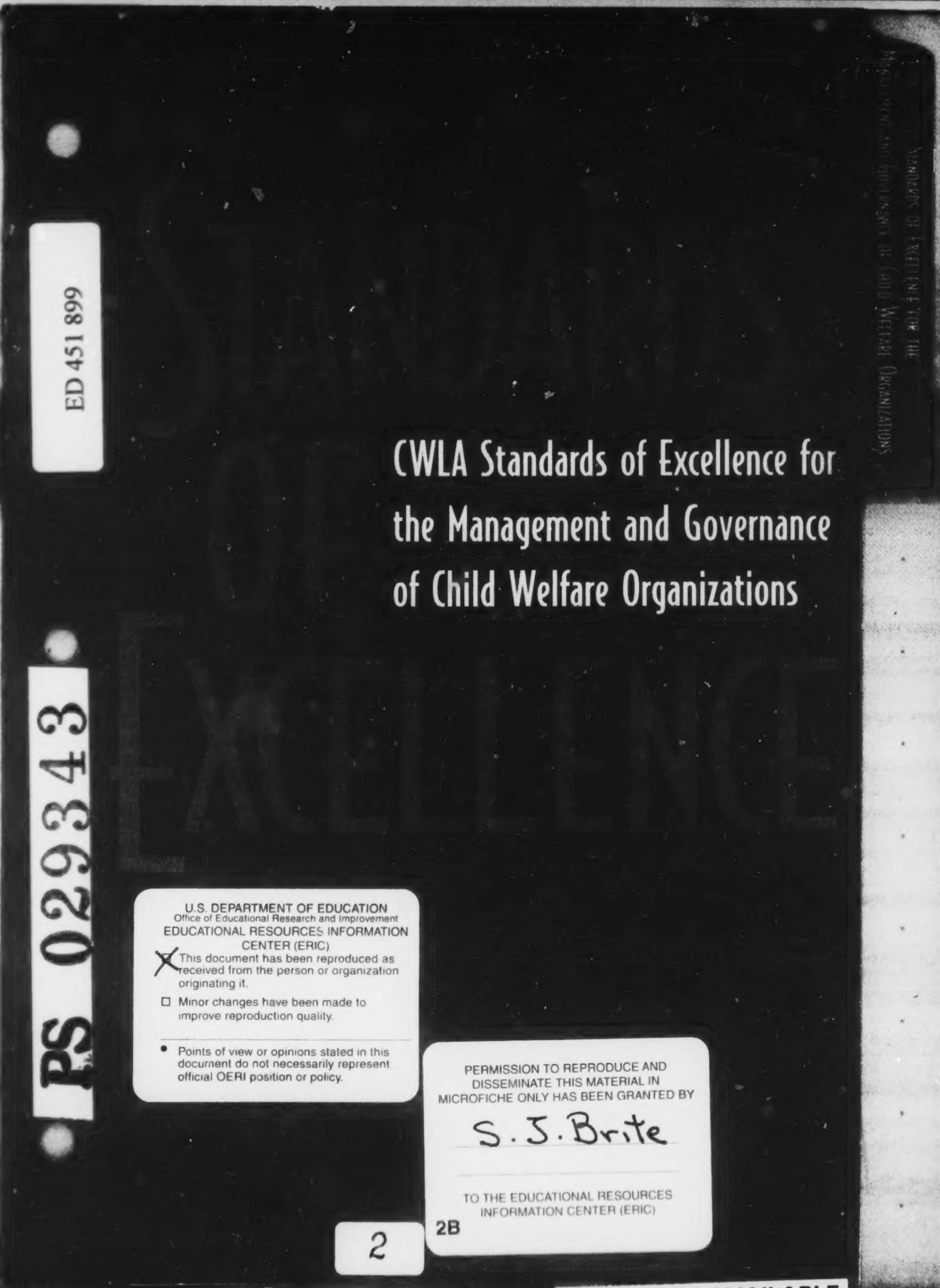

CWLA Standards of Excellence for the Management and Governance of Child Welfare Organizations

STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE OF CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONS

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Child Welfare League of America

CWLA Standards of Excellence for the Management and Governance of Child Welfare Organizations

Child Welfare League of America
Washington, DC

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Foreword

Setting standards and improving practice in all child welfare services have been major goals of the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) since its formation in 1920. With the issuance of this volume, CWLA reaffirms its commitment to establish standards of excellence that can be used as goals to advance and guide contemporary practice. As we continue to learn more about the essentials for the healthy growth of children, CWLA can help to redefine the responsibility of society to provide for children the conditions and opportunities that encourage their development.

Since the inception of its program of standards development, CWLA has formulated a series of standards based on current knowledge, the developmental needs of children, and tested ways of meeting these needs most effectively. The preparation of standards involves an examination of current practices and the assumptions on which they are based, a survey of the professional literature and standards developed by others, and a study of the most recent experiences of social work and related fields—child development, child care, education, mental health, psychology, medicine, psychiatry, and sociology—as well as other appropriate and pertinent fields such as management, business, technology, communication, and marketing, as they bear on child welfare practice and management.

The final formulation of standards follows an extended discussion of principles and issues by experts in each service area, the drafting of a preliminary statement, and a critical review by CWLA member agencies, representatives of related professions, and other national organizations.

CWLA's preparation of standards involves the wide participation of local, state, provincial, and national agency representatives. Many CWLA member agencies, including state or provincial human service departments, as well as voluntary agencies, have contributed the professional time and travel costs of their staff members who developed these standards, reviewed draft statements, and made suggestions for revision. Representatives of national organizations, governmental agencies, sectarian agencies, universities, and professional associations in related fields have taken part in the various committees.

Purpose of CWLA Standards

The CWLA standards are intended to be standards of excellence—goals for the continuing improvement of services for children and their families. They are not the criteria for CWLA membership, although they do represent those practices considered to be most desirable in providing services to children and their families. As goal standards, they reflect what we as a field collectively recognize as the best ways to work with children and their families. They provide us with a vision to which we can aspire. They also are used in the development of the standards of the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children, Inc. (COA).

CWLA standards are directed to all who are concerned with the enhancement of services to children and their families, including parents; public and nonprofit child welfare agency governing body members; direct service, supervisory, and administrative staff members; the general public; citizen groups; public officials; courts and judges; legislators; professional groups; organizations serving children and their families; organizations whose functions include the planning and financing of community services; state, county, or provincial agencies entrusted by law with functions relating to the licensing or supervision of organizations serving children and their families; advocacy groups; and federations whose membership requirements involve judgments on the nature of services rendered by their member agencies.

Standards of excellence can stimulate the improvement of services only as they question the value of present practices, convey a conviction that change is desirable, offer a philosophic base from which to examine current practice, and provide a vision toward which we can aim. They provide the means to test the premises from which practice develops, and allow the measurement of current services and performance against what is known to be the best possible practice.

Standards are of use in planning, organizing, and administering services; in establishing state, provincial, and local licensing requirements; and in determining requirements for accreditation. They offer content for teaching and training in child welfare and other related fields, in professional schools, in in-service training and staff development programs, and in the orientation of the organization's governing body members, staff members, and volunteers. They can help to explain and justify expenditures and budget requests to fundraising bodies and appropriation committees of legislatures.

Finally, standards can promote an understanding of how a service may more effectively meet the needs of children and their families, what it should be expected to do, and how it can be used. In that way, standards promote increased public interest, understanding, and support for pertinent legislation, improved financing, and the provision of quality services to children and their families.

Review of CWLA Standards

To maintain their visionary quality, CWLA standards are subject to continual review and revision, since knowledge about children, families, communities, human behavior, and the treatment of human needs grows constantly. Developments in management and the social sciences; the continuing evaluation of the effectiveness of current social service practices, policies, and programs; and shifting patterns of social values and social organizations lead to the continued modification of the vision for quality in child welfare practice and management.

In 1993, the Standards and Program Directions Committee of the CWLA Board of Directors recognized the need to supplement the *CWLA Standards for Organization and Administration for all Child Welfare Agencies*. Changes in the field caused by increased demand for services and decreased resources led agencies to seek more efficient, businesslike management and leadership approaches and practices. Agencies began searching for ways to adapt the principles found in the corporate sector without compromising their missions.

A committee was formed and met for the first time on March 17, 1993, in conjunction with CWLA's national conference in Washington, D.C. The group of 30 executives represented a broad spectrum of child welfare agencies throughout the United States and Canada. Representatives of other relevant national organizations and other appropriate specialists supplemented the group's expertise.

The draft produced by the committee was circulated to CWLA's five regions for review by the membership. This volume, resulting from this process, was approved by the CWLA Board of Directors on January 19, 1996. It henceforth stands as the policy of the Child Welfare League of America for the management and governance of child welfare organizations.

Judith S. Block
President
Child Welfare League of America

David S. Liederman
Executive Director
Child Welfare League of America

Acknowledgments

To all those organizations that contributed their time and money to allow their executives to participate in this far-reaching and comprehensive effort, CWLA expresses its most sincere appreciation.

Deep appreciation is also expressed to committee chair D. Sharon Osborne, of the Children's Home Society of Washington, for her inspirational leadership, forward thinking, and guidance throughout the process; to subcommittee chairs Maria Rodriguez-Immerman and James Mason (Introduction, Core Values), Roger Toogood (Organizational Establishment, Governance, and Administration), Charles Baker (Human Resources), and Mary Emmons (Business Management, Marketing, and Resource Development) for their steadfast commitment to the mission and their competency in negotiating divergent views into a consensus; and to all the members of the committee for their unending devotion to our field of work, and their fierce desire to better the lives of children and their families.

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How to Use CWLA Standards

CWLA standards are designed for quick and easy access to pertinent information.

A two-part format for the standards was approved by CWLA's Board of Directors in 1984. This volume, entitled *CWLA Standards of Excellence for the Management and Governance of Child Welfare Organizations,* presents the management and governance components of child welfare practice that apply across the field. As the other volumes of CWLA's standards are revised and updated, this volume will serve as a replacement for *CWLA Standards for Organization and Administration for All Child Welfare Services*; in the interim, it supplements and goes beyond the concepts presented in that volume. The components of each specific service area are presented in separate volumes and encompass only those service elements applicable to a particular arena of child welfare practice. Each will be updated when appropriate.

The contents page of each standard affords a rapid review of the general and specific subjects covered. For information on a particular practice, the index lists in alphabetical order each subject of interest and its related categories in the text. Each standard is designated by a number. The digit before the decimal point indicates the chapter where the standard can be found; the digits after the decimal point designate its numerical order within the chapter. The first (nonindented) paragraph of each numbered section represents the standard. The rest of each section may be considered elaboration, explanation, or illustration. The chapter on "Core Values," numbered 1, offers a philosophical overview and perspective for the remainder of the volume.

When various aspects of an issue are discussed in more than one standard, cross-references are noted in parentheses to other standards that are associated with or are part of the practice necessary for desirable service. Cross-references in this volume referring the reader to standards in other service volumes are noted in parentheses by the specific service standard followed by the appropriate digits (e.g., DC:3.1 or FFC:2.3).

Cross-references to the other volumes are indicated by the following abbreviations:

A = Adoption Service
APS = Services for Pregnant Adolescents and Young Parents
DC = Child Day Care Services
FFC = Family Foster Care
HC = Health Care Services for Children in Out-of-Home Care
IHA = In-Home Aide Services
ILS = Independent-Living Services
O&A = Organization and Administration for All Child Welfare Services
PS = Services for Abused or Neglected Children and Their Families
RGC = Residential Group Care Services
SSPF = Services to Strengthen and Preserve Families with Children

Differentiation of CWLA Standards of Excellence, COA Standards for Accreditation, and State and Provincial Licensing

CWLA Standards of Excellence

The Child Welfare League of America standards of excellence are intended to be used as ideals or goals for practice in the field of child welfare services. They are intended to provide a vision of what is best for children and their families and as such, encourage the continual strengthening of services. CWLA standards carry no implication of control or regulation. Rather, by bringing together the collective experience of the field to bear upon the work of each organization, they provide a valuable tool for both public and nonprofit agencies.

The standards present practices considered to be most desirable in providing services, regardless of the organization's auspices or setting. CWLA's standards program illustrates one way in which a national organization influences practice throughout North America

CWLA's standards make it possible to compare what exists with what is considered most desirable for children and their families, and to judge the extent to which current performance approximates or deviates from the most desirable practice. The standards have an educational purpose as well, disseminating what is accepted to be the best current thinking and practice in each child welfare service area.

Since CWLA initiated its standards-setting function, it has continued to revise established standards and to develop new ones as new services emerge. Setting standards involves consultation with national experts and direct service practitioners, a comprehensive review of the literature, and the achievement of professional consensus based on knowledge, experience, and research.

COA Standards for Accreditation

Published by the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children, Inc. (COA), the Standards for Accreditation constitute a set of requirements for current agency administration, management, and service delivery. They are rigorous but realistic descriptions of practice that a competent provider organization should be able to meet. They establish a system based on measurable criteria, and as such, represent a breakthrough in social service accountability. Although the COA standards are based, in part, on CWLA standards, COA is an independent accrediting body for social service organizations.

State and Provincial Licensing

Through the licensing of child-placement agencies, residential group care facilities, family foster homes, and child day care facilities, states and provinces exercise their police power to protect children from risks against which they would have little or no capacity for self-care and protection. Police power, as defined by Black's Law Dictionary [§1401] is "the exercise of the sovereign right of the government to promote order, safety, health, morals, and the general welfare within constitutional limits and is an attribute of government using the power of the state to enforce laws for the well-being of its citizens." It is the basis of licensing laws. Licensing requirements provide basic protections by the state or province for the well-being of children and their families.

Introduction

As society enters the twenty-first century, too many children and families are in jeopardy, with too few resources and supports. Worldwide, the threat to the future of children can be seen in changing family characteristics and demographics.

The children being born and raised today will have to play a more significant role than did their predecessors to sustain and enrich our social and economic future. In the United States, children constitute a shrinking proportion of the total population. This trend may mean that communities will be less interested in allocating scarce resources to serve children and their families. The most recent Census Bureau statistics show that fewer than half of all U.S. families have children.[1]

Among families that do have children, nearly one in three has only one parent living in the household.[2] In the early 1990s, single parent families constituted 24.5% of Caucasian and 63% of African American households. The corresponding proportions in 1970 were 10% for Caucasians and 36% for African-Americans. In 1993, there were 1.3 million single parent Latino families, representing 35% of all Latino families with children.[3]

Children in female-headed households with no other adult present are especially likely to live in poverty. A number of social factors have contributed to increasing concentrations of poverty in certain communities, including changing labor markets, increased suburbanization, relocation of companies, and continuing racial discrimination. Sociodemographic shifts have left in their wake shattered communities with a great many unemployed adults and high school dropouts, high crime rates, and high infant mortality rates. An increasing number of families are being torn apart by substance abuse and HIV. An estimated 72,000 to 125,000 children will be orphaned by the year 2000 as a result of AIDS.[4]

Poverty not only affects the growth and development of children, it also increases family stresses that may lead to abuse or neglect. While child maltreatment occurs at all socioeconomic levels, the reported incidence of abuse and neglect is *highest* for children from low-income families.

Too many children are dying in North America's inner cities and rural communities. They are literally dying as a result of poverty and an epidemic of violence, in which America's children are both perpetrators and victims, and figuratively dying as they lose hope in the possibility of a future worth contemplating. Their spirits and their potential are being prematurely extinguished as they are failed by their families, by their schools, by their community institutions, and by a society that has not chosen to invest adequately and appropriately in the prevention, support, and when needed, remediation and treatment services that children and their families must have to lead healthy, constructive, and satisfying lives.

Many children are hastened into premature parenthood, assuming its responsibilities when they have not yet experienced the joy of being loved and cared for as children themselves. Alienated from social institutions (often including their own families), these youngsters grow up without confidence in the future and without a sense of the constructive role that each can play in contributing to a cooperative and peaceful social order.

Risk indicators for childhood trauma are rising rapidly, while resources to help are diminishing. These realities underscore the need for the child welfare field to organize itself in a maximum, sustained effort to counter the damage that so many children and families are suffering. Without a fundamental commitment to the needs of children and their families, society will remain locked in crisis.

The current public and nonprofit child welfare system provides an array of services and programs, from efforts to prevent harm to children, to investigations of reports that children have been maltreated; from services to families to prevent the unnecessary and inappropriate removal and placement of their children in out-of-home care, to the provision of appropriate, high-quality residential treatment; and from services aimed at reunifying families, to preparation of young children in long-term out-of-home care for adoption, or of teens for living independently.

Clearly, successful intervention at the earliest stage, that is, prevention, is best for children, families, and society. As the child welfare system has developed, however, it has placed greater emphasis and funding on rehabilitative services. In human terms, the cost to society of the current underfunded, crisis-driven system is simply too high.

Redefining Child Welfare Services

The term *child welfare* has traditionally referred to the welfare, or well-being, of society's most vulnerable children. In the early days, child welfare services were provided by charitable agencies to those children whose well-being was threatened by a lack of family support. Later, society called on its government to assist needy children through the establishment of child protection laws. These laws focused child welfare more narrowly on services for children who were abused or neglected.

As time passed, the definition of *child welfare* evolved to encompass both the prevention of child maltreatment and the treatment of the effects of such abuse or neglect. Society's recognition of the importance of also addressing the needs of the families of abused or neglected children has further expanded the scope of work for today's child welfare organizations.[5]

As the conditions of the vulnerable children traditionally served by child welfare organizations became more complex, many nonprofit agencies expanded their use of governmental funding sources. Today, many private nonprofit child welfare organizations blend revenues from public child welfare, mental health, special education, juvenile justice, substance abuse treatment, developmental disabilities, and other relevant government funding streams.

Today, *child welfare* must be defined broadly enough to include the many conditions that threaten the well-being of vulnerable children. It must allow us to use a multidisciplinary approach to serving children in the context of strengthening their families and the communities where they reside, through a full array of services funded by a broad base of governmental and nongovernmental revenue sources.

It is within this broadened definition of child welfare that we prepare for the challenges ahead.

Challenges and Opportunities Facing Child Welfare Organizations

As the needs of children and their families intensify, the environment in which services are delivered is rapidly changing. The shift in governmental involvement from the federal to state/provincial and local levels is changing how decisions are made about program priorities. As the federal investment in children diminishes, local communities are taking many different paths to developing the funding necessary for services. Likewise, the involvement of for-profit service providers and national managed health care organizations has significantly increased the competitiveness and uncertainty of the business environment in which organizations must operate.

These changes threaten the long-term viability of those public and nonprofit organizations that are unable to adjust. On the other hand, the situation has created a unique opportunity for those who are able to anticipate such changes and properly prepare their organizations for them.

Managed care, with its emphasis on outcomes, expanded access to primary care services, and capitated rates, has had a major impact on practice in many communities. Managed care principles have been employed in the private physical health care domain for many years. In health care, the use of managed care has resulted in consolidation, the streamlining of services, the establishment of alliances and provider networks, and the merger of service providers.

The boundaries that once differentiated physical health care, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, child welfare, and juvenile justice are rapidly disappearing. As managed care principles are increasingly applied to all of these funding streams, child welfare organizations are challenged to completely reengineer the way in which they conceive, deliver, evaluate, and fund services. The demands for outcome accountability and demonstrated results require the child welfare organization to be sophisticated in its use of business principles and technology, and to possess a statistical capability.

Child Welfare in the Twenty-First Century

The tremendous stressors faced by today's children and their families, coupled with the fundamental changes taking place in the business environment, place numerous challenges at the doorstep of each child welfare organization and the field as a whole.

In many ways, the child welfare field is facing a crisis of meaning. What differentiates the child welfare profession from others? As the professions combine their efforts, what special competencies does child welfare bring that will strengthen its partnerships with other disciplines?

Today's climate requires nothing less of child welfare professionals than a shift in emphasis from managing individual organizations and people to leading a fundamental rebirth of the field of child welfare. Each government agency, each nonprofit organization, each community, must redefine itself to adapt to the changing reality. From confusion and uncertainty can come the opportunity to create a future in which the needs of children and their families are met more holistically, more thoroughly, more proactively, and more efficiently than ever before.

Three operating principles should guide the child welfare organization:

- Child welfare organizations must assert the fundamental principles and values of society and the child welfare profession, which can easily become lost in the sea of change.
- Child welfare organizations must rethink old assumptions about theory and practice in the face of daunting evidence of threats to the future of children.
- Child welfare organizations must advocate clearly and emphatically for access to a comprehensive array of services for every child and family. This array of services must be adequately funded and reflective of a partnership between public and nonprofit child- and

family-serving organizations and the funding bodies that support them.

Today, our children's futures are at risk. Their future well-being is uncertain. The standards in this volume are designed to facilitate the child welfare organization's journey toward meeting these important challenges.

Notes

1. U.S. Bureau of the Census Current Population Reports, *Household and Family Characteristics: March 1993.* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1994).
2. Families are defined as two or more persons related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together.
3. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1994.
4. The Orphan Project, *Orphans of the HIV Epidemic* (New York: Author, 1994).
5. For a history of child welfare, see R. H. Bremner, *Childen and youth in America: A documentary history* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971).

1

Core Values

The uncertain times facing child welfare necessitate a strong reassertion of our fundamental principles and values concerning the welfare of children. The core values listed in this chapter are the foundation on which the management and governance of public and nonprofit child welfare organizations stand. It is on these values that this volume of standards is based:

- The child welfare organization should be mission driven.
- The child welfare organization should be an advocate for the well-being of all children.
- Public and nonprofit child welfare organizations should work in partnership to ensure the availability of a full array of services in every community.
- Child welfare services should be community based.
- Child welfare services should build on family strengths.
- Child welfare services should promote individual and cultural identity.
- Child welfare services should be customer driven, child centered, and family focused.
- Child welfare organizations should be ethically and effectively led.

1.1 The child welfare organization should be mission driven

The child welfare organization should be driven by a mission that is grounded in the basic human principles of justice, equality, respect, compassion, responsibility, and integrity.

The turbulence of the times requires a clear focus on the purpose of child welfare as a field and by individual organizations.

Principles such as those set forth above are timeless. They transcend the popular culture with its emphasis on self-indulgence and material success.

While adhering to these principles, the organization's mission should be flexible as well, in order to be relevant to changing social conditions. It should reflect a recognition that today's children and their families face unanticipated challenges, and an awareness that today's child welfare organization operates in a rapidly changing environment. This means that organizations (and the missions that drive them) should treat children in the context of their families, families in the context of their cultures and communities, and communities in the context of their social, economic, cultural, and political environments.

1.2 The child welfare organization should be an advocate for the well-being of all children

As experts regarding the general well-being of children, child welfare organizations are obligated to and should speak out for what helps children grow into capable adulthood and for the support all families need as the primary resource to help them in this critical process.

In many ways our society is adult centered and individualistic. Thus, it does not automatically assume proper responsibility for its children.

Child welfare organizations must listen continuously to the people they serve, and represent and support the expression of their needs to public policy decision makers.

Children and their families need different things at different times. The effective advocate for children and their families should assist the local community in moving away from a fragmented view of problems and solutions to a systemic approach of analyzing needs and strengths and integrating comprehensive services accordingly.

The child welfare organization should speak out strongly for ensuring an adequate community response to the changing needs of children.

The child welfare organization's community education and development efforts should educate funders and purchasers of services about what is effective for the well-being of all children and especially the community's most troubled and at-risk children and their families. Most people have a natural fear of the unknown and prefer to affiliate with those like themselves. The child welfare organization should help individuals develop an understanding of the experiences of others. In that manner, prejudices can be reduced and a greater sense of community can evolve.

Because few social institutions have a better understanding than the child welfare organization of the impact of negative social forces and stereotypes on children, the child welfare organization's leaders should become educators and advocates with the larger society. This will facilitate the community's understanding of the complexity of the problems facing children and their families, the historic failure of communities to address these problems effectively, and the responsibility shared by all for providing an environment in which children and their families can flourish.

1.3 Public and nonprofit child welfare organizations should work in partnership to ensure the availability of a full array of services in every community

An effective partnership should exist between the public child welfare organization in each community and the nonprofit organizations with which it contracts.

Effective partnerships contribute to a service delivery system that is:

- Proactive, preventive, and developmental in its approach, and comprehensive in its treatment of children and their families;
- Flexible and responsive in ensuring that services are driven by the needs expressed by children and their families; and
- Closely linked to the neighborhoods, communities,

and cultural and religious groups with which the children and their families identify.

Historically, society has focused too much energy on seeking solutions to problems instead of trying to prevent them in the first place. In child welfare, this partly explains why such a high percentage of resources are consumed by a relatively small number of children in the most intensive services. Public and nonprofit child welfare organizations should work together to contribute to the development of a comprehensive array of both preventive and interventive services. Child welfare organizations are uniquely competent regarding both the normative and special needs of all children and their families.

- Some children will reap the greatest benefit from the treatment of problems in their most acute phases.
- Some children have problems that are extremely resistant to intervention, requiring residence away from the family and community for a carefully defined period of time, based on the individual needs of each child.
- Some children may benefit from massive infusions of wraparound and family preservation services to support them in their families.
- Some children may benefit most from less intrusive but highly coordinated treatment and/or support services in an effort to prevent the need for intensive interventions.
- Some children may benefit most from having available to them informal supports during times of stress to develop their abilities to cope with life's typical struggles.

Every organization need not provide a full array of services. Every organization, however, should actively participate in the development of its community's full array of services, bringing special competencies to the task and ensuring that a full range of supports and assistance for children and families is available to all who can benefit.

Individual child welfare organizational priorities should be continually evaluated in relation to identified local needs and the overarching outcomes desired by the community at large. A collaborative approach to the establishment of individual organizational priorities, funding, and service delivery will best support the achievement of communitywide outcomes.

1.4 Child welfare services should be community based

The child welfare organization should provide services in response to the needs of the communities it serves and should be sensitive to the many ways *community* can be defined: culturally, demographically, ethnically, geographically, or by interest, needs, race, or religion.

Geographic definitions of community can be overly simplistic and obscure significant variations in the ways families define their own communities. Ultimately, community is defined by commonality and interdependence.

The child welfare organization should identify and encourage the development and strengthening of each family's sense of community—the natural supports to which families have historically turned first in times of trouble—and should work to enhance these natural supports if possible. In doing so, the child welfare organization should be cognizant and respectful of the needs, strengths, and dynamics of the given community, and should support its members, organizations, and institutions in achieving their goals.

1.5 Child welfare services should build upon family strengths

The child welfare organization should adopt a wellness orientation that respects and engages the natural ability of each child and family to determine their own needs and goals, and the strategies to meet and achieve them.

Most families are basically capable and desirous of achieving self-sufficiency and effective family functioning.

- Services should be designed to enhance the self-esteem and capacities of all family members, enabling them to better access existing community resources and obtain needed supports.

- Services should be effective for and respectful of children and families of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

These approaches reflect the child welfare organization's "relentlessly optimistic" view of the capacity of individuals to grow and change.

Child welfare services should be developmentally focused and responsive to the normative needs of children and their families. They should build competence in the important skills of daily living.

> For example, clients who can benefit from residential treatment in a restrictive setting should be helped to develop social, academic, and/or occupational skills necessary in the community to which they return, rather than coping skills for effective institutional living.

Equally important, child welfare services should prepare children for their eventual role as parents.

1.6 Child welfare services should promote individual and cultural identity

The child welfare organization should validate every child's individual and cultural identity and self-esteem, and seek to enhance it through supportive relationships.

Cultural beliefs, customs, and practices are an integral part of the overall development and welfare of all children and their families and should be affirmed by the organization. Therefore, the child welfare organization should ensure that all of its activities, services, and programs are conducted in a manner that is sensitive to and shows respect for the cultural and ethnic diversity of its constituents.

Children's identity and self-esteem are integrally related to their ethnic, racial, religious, and cultural experiences. This belief should be reflected throughout the organization—in its mission statement, in its approach to service delivery, in its selection and education of staff at all levels, and in its day-to-day operations.

Beyond the effect on its services of these considerations, the child welfare organization should acknowledge the profound impact that racism and cultural insensitivity have had and continue to have on the welfare of all children in society. The organization should recognize racism as a root cause of great personal and social pain and turmoil, and should confront it in the community whenever it is identified.

Using this heightened awareness, the organization should commit itself to providing quality services that are effective and relevant to diverse people, and to conducting its own business in a respectful manner with diverse staff members and board members.

As part of its effort to move toward best practice, the organization should create an atmosphere that encourages communication on cultural issues.

1.7 Child welfare services should be customer driven, child centered, and family focused

The child welfare organization should actively seek input from children and their families in the design and delivery of its services, and should continually gather feedback from its clients to improve service effectiveness and efficiency in ways that are significant and meaningful to those clients.

The child welfare organization should serve each child in the context of his/her biological family, as well as any other family constellations (e.g., extended, adoptive, foster, etc.) that are significant to the child.

The family should be the primary agent of change for improving the welfare of the child. The family should be served in the context of its community and all the relevant social institutions it encounters. Cultural variations are particularly important in understanding the family's methods of communicating, child rearing, problem solving, and the like.

Too often, the individual child has been seen as the sole focus of both public and nonprofit child welfare organizations. Recent practice, however, has appropriately emphasized the importance of the child's family in treatment. Nonetheless, the child should remain the organization's principal focus of concern, effort, and advocacy.

1.8 Child welfare organizations should be ethically and effectively led

The effective child welfare organization should be driven by the principles and values of child welfare, effectively integrated with modern business practices.

Shrinking resources require an increasing emphasis on stewardship and the adoption of sophisticated management technology. Effective management of information, awareness of costs per work activity, and measurement of tangible results are all dimensions of the kind of improved organizational capacity essential to the child welfare organization's survival.

A process of continual quality improvement should be built into every aspect of organizational functioning. Feedback from customers about service effectiveness should be used to drive improvements in existing processes and services and lead to the development of new ones.

Recognizing that effective child welfare practice is dependent upon the establishment of the therapeutic relationship between staff members (paid or unpaid) and clients, the organization should demonstrate its appreciation for all of its staff members as its greatest resource. To that end, the organization should demonstrate a commitment to the professional growth of its staff members, encourage their involvement in decisions that affect their work, and hold them accountable for results.

The child welfare organization should seek an independent third-party assessment of the quality of its services and its organizational capacities. It should seek validation that it is providing service at a level of quality consistent with national consensus-based standards from independent entities (i.e., the national accreditation system, which has standards based upon sound principles of child welfare practice for the array of services that the organization provides).

The adoption of these management practices is necessary for the future vitality of any child welfare organization, but it is not sufficient. Ethical and effective leadership also is required. Such leadership can be defined as inclusive of six driving forces:

1. *A relentless commitment to serve the organization's customers.* This commitment begins with a recognition of the needs of the organization's primary customers—children and their families. Ultimately, the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization's service to its customers will determine its long-term viability.

This commitment also must include service to the organization's secondary customers, particularly its funders and donors. All those with a responsibility and interest in improving the quality of community life should be engaged in a partnership with the child welfare organization.

2. *A striving to achieve the organization's mission and uphold its values.* In an age of uncertainty, an understanding of the organization's overriding purpose and its relationship to the changing environment is essential. Likewise, the leadership must be clear about the timeless values held within the organization that serve as standards for evaluating its every activity. The organization's structure, systems, and processes should reflect those values.

3. *A commitment to define, monitor, and evaluate service results.* Outcome data on effectiveness aids in improving individual services and should be used in the aggregate to make decisions about program modifications, enhancements, and closure.

4. *A commitment to create a learning organization.* Increasingly, the success of the organization will depend upon the educated, empowered judgment of those working most closely with its customers. The function of the organization's administration must become less directing, controlling, and managing, and more clarifying of the environmental context—creating meaning and enabling staff members to best meet customers' needs. This will require a shift in what many organization's governing bodies and CEOs have traditionally interpreted as their responsibilities. It will also require new skills of staff members and volunteers.

5. *The formation of strategic alliances that create integrated delivery systems.* Organizations that under-

stand the needs of their customers in light of the organization's mission and the changing environment will see many new opportunities to create needed services, enhance cross-cultural alliances, and improve efficiencies. Establishing partnerships, joint ventures, affiliations, and mergers are important methods of increasing organizational capacity and/or reducing costs.

6. *The ability to recognize and act quickly upon opportunities and threats in the changing business environment.* Increasingly, the ability of the organization to predict (by data or intuition) significant changes before they occur will be necessary to adjust organizational capacity to meet those changes. The flexibility implicitly needed for this will only be possible in those organizations that are clear about their missions and values, and that are customer focused and learning oriented.

2

Organizational Establishment, Governance, and Administration

Auspices and Mandates

2.1. Organizational auspices

The organization should be established under public, nonprofit, or trust auspices.

> The nonprofit organization may be established under either religious or nonsectarian auspices.

2.2 Nonprofit organizations: Articles of incorporation

The nonprofit organization should be incorporated according to applicable state/provincial and or local requirements.

2.3 Public organizations: Authorization

The public organization should be authorized by law to administer child welfare services.

2.4 Authority to act

The organization receiving children should be authorized by law to receive children, to accept the transfer of parental rights, to receive custody and guardianship, and to provide child welfare services.

Organizational Mission, Vision, and Goals

2.5 The mission statement

The organization should have a mission statement that defines the purpose for which the organization was formed and continues to exist, describes the organization's identity and focus, and outlines the target populations and geographic areas the organization will serve. [1.1]

> The extent of the organization's services are determined by its auspices, by its human and financial resources, and by its efforts to meet community needs.

2.6 Review of the mission statement

The mission statement's relevance should be reviewed regularly and modified when necessary to conform the organization's activities to changing community needs. [2.23]

> The mission statement review should be conducted by a team that includes representatives of the organization's governing body, staff, and other stakeholders.
>
> The mission statement review should focus on the broadest organizational context of the organization's operating environment and its customers.

2.7 Commitment to cultural diversity

The mission statement should explicitly set forth the organization's commitment to recognize and respond to the culturally and ethnically diverse client populations served by the organization. [1.6]

2.8 Vision, goals, and long-term direction

The organization should have a written statement that sets forth its vision, goals, and long-term direction. [2.23]

> The organization's vision describes what the organization will strive to become.

> Members of the organization's governing body, with the input of the staff and other stakeholders, should participate in the creation of the organization's vision.

The organization's goals help the organization move toward its vision.

The organization's vision and goals, linked to the mission, provide the organization with a compass for making decisions in a rapidly changing world by providing a shared sense of long-range direction.

2.9 Strategic plan

The organization should have a strategic plan that details the organization's mission, vision, goals, strategies, and the major actions it must undertake in the next three to five years to deal with the principal issues it will face as it moves toward achievement of its vision. [2.29]

The strategic plan focuses the organization's activities and resources on the priorities necessary to meet the changing demands of the environment while moving the organization toward achievement of its vision.

2.10 Annual operating plan

The organization should translate its strategic plan into an annual operating plan that integrates the long-range direction of the strategic plan into the organization's daily activities.

The annual operating plan should include measurable annual objectives, timelines, and evaluation criteria, as well as a process for monitoring the organization's progress.

While the individual components of the annual planning process can be defined as discrete units, an effective annual planning process is well-integrated, with all aspects of unit planning aligned. It is dynamic and responsive, and conducted in an ongoing annual cycle.

The organization's annual plan should be reflected in its annual budget.

Responsibilities and Obligations of the Public Organization (City, County, State/Provincial)

2.11 Licensing and accreditation

The public organization should meet applicable licensing requirements and national accreditation standards, and should move toward meeting the standards of practice established by the Child Welfare League of America.

2.12 Obligations under law

The public organization is obligated by law to set and maintain minimum care and protection requirements for those unable to care for or protect themselves.

> The public organization should be in the forefront of progressive practice. It should educate the general public and elected officials, as well as the professional community, concerning the needs of children and their families.

2.13 Identifying and satisfying service needs

The public organization should identify gaps in the services it provides to children and their families and work to fill those identified needs.

> Because the public child welfare organization usually is broadly focused, it has an opportunity to assist in planning services for the entire community.
>
> The public organization should advocate for services for troubled children and their families and for sufficient resources to fund appropriate child welfare services at each level of government.
>
> The public organization may also provide direct services.

2.14 Consultation with nonprofit organizations

The public organization should offer free consultation for the development of policies and procedures to further the establishment and growth of nonprofit child welfare organizations. [1.3]

2.15 Rate setting

The public organization should set its rates predicated upon a negotiation with service providers based upon the full cost of care for the children placed.

Responsibilities and Obligations of the Nonprofit Organization

2.16 Licensing and accreditation

The nonprofit organization should meet applicable licensing requirements and national accreditation standards, and should move toward meeting the standards of practice established by the Child Welfare League of America.

2.17 Identifying and satisfying service needs

The nonprofit organization providing child welfare services should identify the needs of the children and families it serves and should provide the services necessary to meet those needs in accordance with quality standards.

As needed by its clients, the organization may obtain additional services from other agencies in the community.

2.18 Policies and procedures

The organization should base its policies and procedures on its mission and legal purpose, on the community's need for services, on the services it delivers, and on the requirements of its funders.

Organizational policies are broad statements that define the parameters within which the organizational goals will be pursued.

Governance

As the organization develops from a mission-driven organization to one that must achieve a balance between its mission and its bottom line, the roles and responsibilities of the governing body also must evolve. Governing bodies of organizations bring together an array of talents and experiences and can work collectively as complementary partners with the professional chief executive officer (CEO) to be an effective leadership team for the organization. The responsibilities of the modern child welfare organization governing body are both diverse and dynamic.

2.19 Role of the governing body

The organization's governing body should provide leadership and legal accountability for the organization regardless of the form taken by the governing body.

Organizational governing bodies may vary in form, but all are ultimately accountable for the affairs of their organization and for providing leadership for the organization. Although much of this accountability may be delegated to the organization's professional staff, the ultimate accountability of the governing body cannot be delegated.

In the nonprofit organization, the governing body acts as, and is representative of, the community in which it operates. It is accountable to the community for the resources the organization consumes.

In the public organization, the entity guiding the organization may be advisory rather than governing. This is particular true in those public agencies whose management policies are largely controlled by broader governmental entities.

2.20 Structure of the governing body

The organization's governing body should continually examine its structure to make sure that it remains the most effective form for carrying out its changing responsibilities.

The organization may need to consider the restructuring of its governing body as the organization progresses through the developmental process, and as matters such as litigation, multiple service sites, and other considerations arise and take on new importance. The variations on structure detailed below, as well as others, should be periodically considered by the organization as it evaluates the effectiveness of its current governing body structure to carry out its changing responsibilities.

- *Multicorporate Structures*

  Organizations may convert themselves into multicorporate structures in which one governing body is created for operating the organization's programs, another governing body is used for fund development (e.g., a foundation), and yet another governing body is established for purchasing, managing, and leasing back property, facilities, and large capital items (e.g., vehicles) to the operating governing body. Some child welfare organizations, however, find this structure unnecessary or burdensome, as it may require extra paperwork and intraorganizational controls to maintain effective management.

- *Regional/District Governing Bodies*

  Organizations interested in capturing the benefits of community involvement and an increased sense of organizational ownership may establish regional/district governing bodies. In some instances, these governing bodies begin as advisory committees to outstationed projects and move, often uncontrollably, toward independence from the central governing body.

- *Community-Based Advisory Committees*

  Organizations may use community-based advisory committees (or community-based governing bodies) to balance the desire for autonomy with inclusionary discussions about the organization's core functions, such as organizational mission and shared vision, accreditation, quality improvement, philosophy of treatment, and so on. This involvement in creating the core of the organization helps those involved in outstationed sites to see themselves as an integral part of the larger organization.

The structure of the governing/advisory body of the public organization may be dictated by law. In such situations, the organization may have less autonomy in restructuring its governing body.

2.21 Responsibilities of the governing body

Members of the governing body should assume leadership, advocacy, and fiduciary responsibility for the organization.

The manner in which the members of the governing body conduct the affairs of governance should justify the continuing good will of the community at large and the resources the organization consumes.

The governing body is ultimately responsible for:

- establishment of the organization's articles of incorporation and bylaws;
- creation and review of the organization's mission and vision;
- recruitment of the CEO;
- employment of the CEO;
- review and evaluation of the CEO;
- support of the CEO;
- selection of a successor to the CEO;
- creation and approval of the organization's strategic plan;
- approval of the organization's annual operating plan and budget;
- fund and resource development;
- development and approval of organizational policies;
- fiduciary oversight;
- risk-management planning;
- legislative advocacy;
- community education;
- recruitment and selection of the governing body's members;
- orientation of the governing body's members;
- enhancement of governance skills; and
- evaluation of the governing body's performance.

Although the roles of the public organization's advisory body may be narrower than those of the nonprofit organization's governing body, it should still assume the core responsibilities of leadership, advocacy, and fiduciary oversight.

2.22 Establishment of the articles of incorporation and bylaws

The organization's governing body should establish and periodically review the legal structure, constitution, and bylaws of the organization.

In establishing and reviewing the bylaws of the organization, the governing body should ensure that the following topics are covered:

- eligibility requirements for membership,
- process for the election/rotation of officers and members,
- process for establishing committees, and
- areas of responsibility for the governing body and staff members.

2.23 Creation and review of the organization's mission and vision

The organization's governing body, with the input of its staff and other stakeholders, should establish the mission and vision of the organization, and should periodically review and update the mission to ensure continuing relevance of the organization's activities to current community needs. [1.1, 2.5–2.8]

2.24 Recruitment of the CEO

The organization's governing body should appoint a search committee to recruit a CEO for the organization.

The appointment of the CEO should be approved by the full governing body.

In the public organization, the governing or advisory body should participate in the hiring and evaluating of the CEO to the full extent permitted under the laws and regulations governing the organization. In some cases, the appointment of the CEO may be shared between the organization's advisory or governing body and one or more political entities.

2.25 Employment of the CEO

When employing a CEO, the organization's governing body should enter into a written employment agreement that sets forth the terms and conditions of the CEO's employment. [2.51]

The employment agreement should be jointly and regularly reviewed by the chair of the governing body and whoever else is designated, along with the CEO.

The governing body should ensure the prompt orientation of the new CEO to smooth the transition to the organization.

2.26 Review and evaluation of the CEO

The governing body should determine the CEO's job description and the criteria to be used in evaluating the CEO's job performance, and should conduct an annual written evaluation of the CEO. [2.67]

2.27 Support of the CEO

The governing body should support the CEO as an equal partner in leading the organization toward achievement of its shared vision.

As partners, the governing body and the CEO should help each other do their respective jobs better.

2.28 Selection of a successor to the CEO

The governing body should ensure the existence of a plan for CEO succession in the event of the CEO's resignation, termination, major illness, or extended leave of absence.

2.29 Creation and approval of the organization's strategic plan

The organization's governing body should create with the CEO and approve a strategic plan to move the organization toward achievement of its vision over the next three to five years. [2.9, 4.7]

2.30 Approval of the organization's annual operating plan and budget

The organization's governing body should approve an annual operating plan and corresponding budget that are consistent with its strategic plan. [4.18, 4.19]

The CEO, in conjunction with the organization's employees, should develop an annual operating plan and budget, and present them to the governing body for its approval. [2.55]

2.31 Fund and resource development

The governing body should maintain an active role, in partnership with the CEO, in raising money for the organization and in ensuring that the organization is adequately funded to protect its sustainability. [2.58, 4.34–4.35]

All members of the governing body should contribute financially to the organization at a level significant to each.

Members of the governing body can promote the organization's fund development program by making personal contributions, identifying donors and soliciting contributions, and participating in fundraising activities.

The governing body of the public organization may meet its fund development obligation by advocating with elected officials for sufficient resources to fund required services, advocating in behalf of children for the levying of program-specific taxes, and seeking alternative sources of funding such as grant funds, gifts, and the establishment of a foundation or endowment.

The use of an auxiliary has been found to be useful as a mechanism for public organization fundraising.

2.32 Development and approval of organizational policies

Organizational policies should be recommended by and developed jointly with the CEO and other relevant stakeholders; the organization's governing body should approve those policies that concern all major aspects of the organization.

The policy-setting role of the governing/advisory body in the public organization may be more limited than that of the nonprofit organization, since many policies are set for public organizations by other governmental entities.

2.33 Fiduciary oversight

The governing body is ultimately accountable for the fiscal management of the corporation, and should review and approve the annual operating budget of the organization, as proposed by the CEO, and monitor the organization's adherence to the budget throughout the year.

The governing body should delegate the daily administration of the organization's finances to the CEO, who should provide regular reports on the organization's financial situation to the governing body. [2.58]

The governing body should use an independent accountant or state/provincial auditor to audit annually the use of the organization's funds. [4.24]

The governing body, in partnership with the CEO, should establish boundaries for certain financial activities such as spending, disposal of property, and incurring of debt. [4.22–4.23]

The organization's fiduciary responsibility should be conducted as a component of the governing body/CEO partnership.

2.34 Risk-management planning

The organization's governing body should—both directly and through delegation to the CEO—protect the organization's clients, personnel, physical plant, and financial resources by means of an evaluation of risk and the development of a risk-management plan. [2.59, 4.5]

The risk management process should include the establishment of written policies and procedures to both manage and reduce the liabilities to which the organization may be subject. The governing body should keep these policies and procedures for managing and reducing risk current.

The results of the risk-evaluation process should lead to the development of the organization's risk-management plan.

The governing body should ensure that the organization has insurance covering its governing body directors and officers, and employment, liability, and other coverage deemed necessary upon the evaluation of the organization's risks.

In the public organization, the governing/advisory body may have no role in risk management, which often is a function of other governmental entities.

2.35 Legislative advocacy

The organization's governing body, in consultation with the CEO, should initiate programs of legislative advocacy to bring about needed changes and improvements for children and their families through the enactment of effective laws and the establishment of appropriate public policies. [2.57, 2.88]

To improve services for children and their families, the organization's governing body should participate in coordinated advocacy efforts with local, state/provincial, and national organizations to exchange information regarding changing community conditions or other pertinent concerns.

The organization's governing body should select relevant issues and articulate the organization's position in appropriate public forums in partnership with the organization's employees.

The organization's governing body should review demographic data on the cultural diversity of the populations the organization serves, and use this information to inform legislators of the impact of legislation on culturally diverse populations.

The organization's governing body should work with other organizations to inform elected officials and the community leadership of the need for adequate services, and should offer leadership in the process of organizing requests for the necessary resources.

2.36 Community education

The organization's governing body should educate the communities it serves regarding issues in child welfare in the broad sense and in relation to the well-being of all children, and more narrowly, as to how the organization addresses those issues through its array of services.

The presence of a community education program paves the way for effective fund development and assists the governing body in its efforts to recruit members.

In concert with the CEO, the organization's governing body should systematically educate businesses, government, and the media about how the organization's activities are responsive to the community's needs.

2.37 Recruitment, selection, and qualifications of the governing body's members

The organization's governing body should seek out individuals who possess the specialized or particularized skills necessary to help the organization carry out its mission and achieve its vision, and who represent the various cultural and ethnic components of the community served by the organization.

Each governing body member should be responsible for, and capable of participating in, all the duties and responsibilities of governing.

The process for recruiting and selecting members of the governing body should be clearly established in the organization's bylaws.

The governing body should have a well-conceived membership recruitment plan, with a long-term and a short-term perspective, to identify and recruit the most appropriate candidates. A balance between experienced members and new members helps guarantee both continuity and the regular infusion of new ideas.

In recruiting and selecting members, the organization's governing body should consider the age, sex, place of residence, experience as consumers of services, cultural and ethnic background, and skills of candidates for the governing body.

An effective governing body consists of individuals who contribute critically needed skills, experience, resources, perspectives, wisdom, and time to the organization. The expectation of governing body participation should be a part of the job description provided to all nominees and reviewed during the new member orientation process.

The governing body members should be committed to the mission of the organization, and possess the resources (financial or relationships) that have the potential of enhancing the organization, as well as the ability and willingness to work as a team with other members and the CEO in moving toward achievement of the organization's vision.

Job descriptions outlining the activities and responsibilities of members of the governing body should be developed to ensure that new and ongoing members are familiar with the expectations and tasks assigned to them in their various capacities.

> Specifically, job descriptions should be required for the full governing body, the standing committees of the governing body, and the officers of the organization. Each job description should include the job's title and purpose, a position summary, assigned responsibilities (but not necessarily the specific tasks), reporting relationships, and staff resources. In the case of a committee assignment, the description should identify the chairperson and membership of the committee.
>
> Each governing body job description should be reviewed regularly to keep it accurate and current.

2.38 Orientation of members of the governing body

Experienced members of the organization's governing body and the organization's CEO should provide new members of the governing body with a comprehensive orientation to their roles and responsibilities.

> The orientation should include a discussion of the organization's mission, vision, history, and current services; an understanding of the clients served; and an introduction to key staff members.

New members of the governing body should be given the opportunity to learn about the cultural diversity of the organization's clients and how the diversity affects organizational functioning.

2.39 Enhancement of governance skills

The organization's governing body and CEO should conduct an annual assessment of the governing body's members' current competence related to their governing responsibilities and should maintain an ongoing program to enhance the governance competencies of the governing body's members, based on their individual needs.

An annual competence-building plan should be implemented by the governing body's development committee in accord with assessed needs.

Those members with leadership qualities, interest, and relevant experience should be assigned by the governing body's chairperson to chair committees and should be identified for future nomination to higher office.

The organization's CEO and governing body should regularly review the development plan for the governing body and the progress of the governing body's members in acquiring the skills most appropriate to their responsibilities.

2.40 Evaluation of the governing body's performance

The organization's governing body should annually conduct a self-evaluation to assure that it is most effectively moving the organization toward its vision, in concert with its mission.

The self-evaluation process should examine the governing body's structure, functioning, achievement, and individual members' performance, particularly their knowledge of the organization's mission and purpose.

The self-evaluation process should include periodic external input as well as an assessment of the effectiveness of the complementary relationship between the CEO and governing body as they work together to move the organization forward.

Decisions about continuing membership for individual members of the governing body should be based on the results of the self-evaluation.

2.41 Terms of office of members of the governing body

The organization should define in its bylaws specific terms of office for the members of its governing body.

Organizational policies on membership term limits and rotation should allow for continuity by experienced members, as well as the periodic addition of new members who possess the expertise required to carry out newly added responsibilities of the governing body.

Regardless of the specified terms of office, the organization should carefully review and tailor the composition of its governing body to meet the organization's current needs and challenges, and its desire to attract a wide range of new talent, experience, and expertise.

Equally important, the organization should annually review the performance, input, and contributions of each member of the governing body.

> A noncontributing or noninvolved member should be encouraged to improve his or her performance. If no changes occur, the member involved should consider withdrawing from the governing body membership so that others who would better work actively for the welfare of the organization can be instated.

2.42 Function of the governing body's committees

The organization's governing body should function as a group, using various committees to assist it in carrying out its responsibilities.

Governing body committees provide opportunities for intensive study of issues, allow members to specialize, help develop new leadership, sharpen the governing body's decision-making process, and enable the governing body to further its interests in a particular area.

2.43 Structure of the governing body's committees

The structure and use of the committees established by the governing body should be based upon the organization's size and needs.

The need for financial management, fundraising, or personnel or board development, for example, can be met by all organizations through committee work.

Committees may also fill the desire of the organization to give particular attention to the organization's special needs. For example, some organizations might benefit from a Quality Improvement Committee, or an organization's Finance Committee might develop an Investment Subcommittee at an appropriate point.

In addition to establishing committees with specific responsibilities, the organization's governing body should consider creating advisory committees to increase volunteer participation and to assist the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities.

The use by the governing body of advisory or honorary committees allows the organization to increase its use of community volunteers and better reflect the cultural diversity of the populations it serves, thus deepening the organization's connections to the community as well as attracting additional talent.

2.44 Limits on committee authority

Regardless of their size and structure, committees should report to the full governing body and not act as policy-making groups.

An exception might be the use by a large governing body of an Executive Committee, which could act for the governing body between meetings in specified circumstances.

Committees of the governing body should be used to facilitate the work of the governing body, not to undertake the work of staff members.

2.45 Limits on financial gain

Members of the organization's governing body should not be paid for their governance services, nor should they directly or indirectly profit financially in any way from their service.

The organization's governing body must establish a high standard of ethical conduct in areas where a potential conflict of interest could exist. Establishment of and adherence to written policies ensures that members of the governing body have no direct or indirect financial interest in the assets, leases, business transactions, or professional services of the organization.

Governing body members may be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred when acting on specific tasks mandated by the governing body.

2.46 Relationship between governing body and CEO

The organization's governing body should define its relationship with the CEO as a complementary partnership, and should conduct itself accordingly. [2.56]

The roles and responsibilities of the organization's governing body and CEO should be clearly defined and distinguishable, yet at the same time complementary. The governing body hires the CEO, and the CEO hires and manages the staff to carry out the operations of the organization.

The roles and responsibilities of the organization's governing body and CEO should be reexamined periodically as the nature of the organization's mission and the size and scope of the organization change.

2.47 Relationship between governing body and staff members other than the CEO

The organization's governing body should relate to staff members only through the CEO, except when the CEO explicitly delegates areas of board-related responsibility to individual staff members.

To ensure the proper delegation of authority as well as clear communication and decision making, members of the governing body should not make a request of, or give directions to, staff members directly. Conversely, staff members should not make requests of members of the governing body unless authorized to do so by the CEO.

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that information is given to the governing body as required; the governing body should communicate all of its requests of the organization's staff through the CEO.

All staff requests to governing body members should be made by the CEO through the governing body chairperson.

Management

As the field of child welfare continues to evolve, so too does the role of the chief executive officer (CEO). CEOs must be visionary leaders, attuned to shifts in the environment that affect their organization's mission, services, and management requirements. CEOs must be mission-driven agents of change who constantly lead the organization's governing body and staff toward a shared vision of the future, while guiding the organization through changes in its roles, structure, goals, policies, services, and service delivery systems. The CEO's primary focus is to lead, develop, and strengthen the organization as a whole and to advocate for the needs of children and their families.

2.48 Chief Executive Officer

The chief executive officer (CEO) of the organization should provide strong leadership.

The leadership needs of individual organizations will vary, depending on their mission, purpose, size, and stage of development.

Strength of leadership should not be equated with inflexibility. The CEO should first and foremost be capable of assessing the leadership needs of the organization and providing the style and type of leadership needed.

The CEO should excel at developing and working with both the governing body and the staff, and should be capable of creating and developing effective work partnerships, groups, and teams to meet the emerging needs of the organization.

In line with the organization's mission, the CEO must be able to collaborate with others in the community to develop effective partnerships, and to serve as a forceful voice in community planning and in the development of public policy.

2.49 Employment of the CEO

The CEO should be hired by, report to, and work in partnership with the organization's governing body. [2.24–2.26]

2.50 Qualifications of the CEO

The CEO should possess and be able to demonstrate competence in both child welfare service delivery and in organizational management.

The governing body should determine the qualifications it seeks in its CEO to best take the organization to its vision.

The CEO should have formal graduate training, with a minimum of a graduate degree in a human services field or in management.

The CEO's formal graduate training should be complemented with experience and supplemental training to ensure that the CEO brings to the position a human services perspective, an understanding of services and how they work, knowledge of the business/management practices of operating a complex professional organization, and knowledge of organizational dynamics and issues in leading and managing in times of change.

The nature of the organization's services, its size and complexity, its stage of development, and other special circumstances will determine what specifics in the CEO's background and training will best serve an individual organization and its constituencies.

The CEO should be able to provide leadership to all levels of the staff and to the governing body on the importance of culture and ethnicity for quality service delivery, and should be committed to pursuing a program of improving cultural competence throughout the organization.

The CEO should be aware of his or her strengths and weaknesses in light of the requirements for the position and should be committed to maintaining ongoing personal growth and development as an executive while continuing to respond effectively to the dynamics of the organization.

In the public organization, the qualifications for the CEO may be set by the personnel system of the government entity hiring the CEO.

2.51 CEO employment agreement

A formal written employment agreement should be entered into between the governing body, on behalf of the organization, and the CEO. [2.25]

The CEO employment agreement should reflect the unique circumstances of the CEO and the particular requirements of the organization.

The employment agreement should be written to protect both parties.

The employment agreement should be periodically reviewed and updated as necessary.

2.52 CEO compensation and benefits

The organization's governing body should establish the initial level of the CEO's compensation and benefits after careful review of the CEO's previous experience; the size and complexity of the organization's staffing structure; the organization's budget; the number of programs, sites, and funding sources; the CEO's level of performance; and the length of time the CEO has been a part of the organization.

In setting the level of compensation and benefits for the CEO, the organization should consider the salaries and benefits provided to CEOs of comparable organizations, as published in the *CWLA Salary Study* and other surveys.

The CEO may be offered those benefits/incentives necessary to recruit and maintain a qualified and competent person. The benefits/incentives, however, should be comparable to those of other nonprofit organization CEOs in the region and should be both reasonable and justifiable.

In the public organization, the level of compensation for the CEO may be set by the broader government entity hiring the CEO.

2.53 Responsibilities of the CEO

The CEO should possess the competencies required to carry out a range of leadership responsibilities.

As the organization's leader, the CEO should possess the competencies required to

- personify the organization's mission;
- conduct strategic and annual operational planning with the governing body;
- develop a complementary partnership with the governing body;
- provide leadership, accountability, and advocacy;
- develop and manage financial resources;
- evaluate risk and develop a risk-management plan
- create and use an effective management structure;
- develop and implement administrative procedures;
- recruit and retain competent staff members;
- communicate with the staff;
- consider customer interests;
- create a culture of continual quality improvement; and
- set the ethical tone for the organization.

The relative importance of each area of CEO responsibility will vary according to the organization's circumstances (e.g., mission, size, structure, staffing, goals, development stage).

2.54 Personifying the organization mission

The CEO should possess a clear understanding of the organization's mission, be enthusiastic about and energized by that mission, and demonstrate an understanding of and a commitment to children and their families.

The CEO should be mission-driven. He or she must be enthusiastic about and energized by the organization's mission, and must be able to galvanize members of the organization's governing body and staff to willingly and enthusiastically work toward its achievement.

The CEO should demonstrate an understanding of, and have a commitment to, children and their families.

The CEO should be capable of developing a vision of the organization's future that will best allow the organization to actualize its mission.

2.55 Conducting strategic and annual operational planning

The CEO should provide leadership in the identification of critical issues, the development of strategic goals and annual objectives, and the daily activities that will move the organization toward achievement of its vision.

The CEO should have skills in strategic and annual operational planning and should be capable of effectively delegating routine daily operations and decision-making tasks consistent with the capability of others in the organization.

The CEO should maximize the percentage of his or her time spent on the strategic issues confronting the organization and on positioning the organization to meet those challenges successfully.

2.56 Developing a complementary partnership with the governing body

The CEO should formulate and maintain a complementary relationship with the organization's governing body, establishing a partnership with its chairperson and providing the governing body with leadership in identifying policy needs, in establishing policies to meet those needs, and in developing the governing body. [2.46]

The relationship of the CEO and the governing body should clearly reflect the distinct nature of the complementary roles and expectations of both, including an acknowledgment of the unique nature of the CEO's role, which entails both working for and with the governing body. The relationship between the CEO and the chairperson of the governing body is critical in maintaining this necessary partnership.

The CEO should ensure that regular and open communication is maintained with the governing body chairperson.

The CEO should keep the members of the governing body well informed about trends affecting the organization and its future.

2.57 Providing leadership, accountability, and advocacy

The CEO should serve as the primary spokesperson for the organization and its mission in the community it serves. [1.2, 2.35]

To be effective in the public arena, the CEO should be a good communicator.

The CEO should ensure that the organization is open to review and input by the governing body, the community, and the organization's clients, staff, and funders.

The CEO should be an active participant and leader in the community and should strive to be recognized as an advocate for children and families, for child welfare, and for child-centered, family-focused public policies.

The CEO should assume personal responsibility for effective advocacy and activism in behalf of the organization, its mission, and the needs of its clients.

The CEO should see to it that members of the staff and governing body have the capacity for effective advocacy to supplement the efforts of the CEO.

2.58 Developing and managing financial resources

The CEO should be knowledgeable about financial management techniques and resource development strategies, and should ensure that the resources of the organization are managed wisely, accounted for properly, and monitored closely. [4.18, 4.19]

The CEO should have the skills, interest, and commitment to perform a key fundraising role in the organization.

The CEO should continually seek financial independence and security for the organization by a diversification of the organization's financial base and by financial development efforts to increase the unrestricted funds available to the organization to achieve its vision.

2.59 Risk-management planning

The CEO, with the governing body, should develop a process for evaluating and reducing the risks to which the organization, its clients, personnel, physical plant, and financial resources are exposed. [2.34]

2.60 Creating and using an effective management structure

The CEO should design a management structure that is consistent with the organization's leadership needs and is effective.

The CEO is responsible for the ongoing development of an effectively functioning management team.

The management structure devised by the CEO should enhance the organization's ability to assemble and develop effective working teams and should establish levels of decision making, staffing patterns, and their interface.

The CEO should evaluate all elements of the management structure regularly for effectiveness and continued viability, and arrange for their modification when necessary.

The CEO should ensure that all individuals understand clearly how the interface between the various parts of the structure facilitate the work of the entire organization. Where indicated, individuals should be so placed as to ensure that each organizational function is carried out competently.

2.61 Developing and implementing administrative procedures

The CEO should take the lead in developing administrative procedures that reflect the policies approved by the governing body; ensure that the organization operates within its legal and regulatory requirements; and maintain orderly, efficient, and effective operation of the organization.

2.62 Recruiting and retaining competent staff members

The CEO should consistently strive to attract, retain, and promote staff members at all levels of the organization, and to recruit staff members from culturally diverse groups who are highly competent and mission driven, including persons who have experience and competence in working with culturally diverse communities. [3.4, 3.15, 3.27–3.33]

The CEO should lead the organization in providing staff with a supportive work environment that allows them to maximize their talents for the benefit of the organization.

- The CEO should model and demonstrate excitement about the organization's work.
- The CEO should set a personal example of high work standards.
- The CEO should motivate staff members to a high level of performance and hold them responsible for attaining high levels of competence.
- The CEO should encourage high levels of participation in decision making and help staff members learn how to make good decisions and to work as effective team members.

2.63 Communicating with the staff

The CEO should establish a regular means of communicating with all staff members and promote an environment that rewards staff members for open, honest, and healthy communication.

Regular communication is necessary to promote an understanding of the organization's mission, vision, goals, and the changing environment and its effect on the organization. The CEO should maintain various ways of enabling staff members to express their views on issues and policies, and to ask any questions they may have.

2.64 Considering customer interests

The CEO should maintain a broad perspective on the organization and should strive to balance the competing legitimate needs

and interests of the organization's internal customers (members of the governing body and staff) and external customers (clients, funding sources, and community groups).

2.65 Creating a culture of continual quality improvement

The CEO should provide leadership in monitoring and evaluating the quality of the services of the organization

> The CEO should work with the governing body and staff members to create an organizational culture that demonstrates a commitment to achieving excellence in the quality of service delivery.
>
> The CEO should incorporate an accountability system and a quality improvement process into the organization's management system to monitor outcomes and measure progress. Such a system and process allows the organization to continually modify policies and procedures in ways that can improve quality.

2.66 Setting the ethical tone for the organization

The CEO should articulate and practice principled leadership and should adhere to ethical standards of administration and practice to ensure that the rights of all persons associated with the organization are protected.

> The CEO should create a nondiscriminatory and nonoppressive environment throughout the organization by establishing written ethical standards and holding staff members accountable to them.
>
> The CEO should establish procedures to monitor and confirm that all persons have equal access to services and are consistently treated with dignity and respect.

2.67 CEO performance review

The CEO's performance should be reviewed annually, in writing, by the organization's governing body. [2.26]

> At the beginning of the performance year, the CEO and the governing body should agree on criteria for the review of the CEO's performance. The written document should in-

clude agreed-upon, behavior-specific performance criteria, and should be consistent with the duties outlined in the original description of the position.

In addition to professional development goals, the CEO performance review criteria should link the organization's strategic plan and the objectives within the organization's annual operating plan with the organization's overall performance during the period of review. In this respect, the annual CEO evaluation could be combined with the annual governing body's self-evaluation of the effectiveness of the partnership in leading the organization toward its vision.

The governing body chairperson should conduct the review of the CEO's performance after consultation with other governing body members.

The CEO should participate actively in the review process and should be given the opportunity to provide details about his or her own performance, which should be incorporated, as submitted by the CEO, in the written evaluation.

The final performance review document should be shared with the CEO in a face-to-face meeting with the designated members of the governing body.

Managing for Quality

2.68 Organizational corporate and management structure

The organization's corporate and management structure should facilitate efficient movement toward fulfillment of the organization's mission and achievement of the organization's vision. [2.60]

As the organization and its environment changes, the organizational structure should be reviewed and modified to ensure that it continues to support the organization effectively. The CEO should regularly evaluate the components of the organizational structure for continuing effectiveness and should make changes as necessary.

In the design, evaluation, and modification of the management structure, the CEO should take into account the size and stage of development of the organization, and the particular challenges facing it.

Generally, as an organization becomes more complex, it is likely to benefit from increasing levels of delegation by the CEO (who retains the final authority for the organization's affairs) to capable senior managers. Those senior managers—individually and collectively as a management team—assume responsibility for substantial programs/functions and share responsibility with the CEO for the organization's overall performance.

The design and functioning of the management structure must be dynamic, allowing the organization the flexibility to respond quickly and effectively to a changing environment. The CEO must be able to continually adapt the structure of the organization to environmental changes if ongoing organizational effectiveness is to be maintained.

Although organizational lines of authority should be clearly defined, flexibility is needed to allow for purposeful intraorganizational communication among all administrative staff members and other levels of the organization.

The organization should establish procedures for the internal and external coordination of its various units to ensure proper intraorganizational integration of the services provided for clients.

2.69 Organizational chart

The CEO should prepare an organizational chart that delineates the lines of authority, communication, and accountability within the organization.

An organizational design with a relatively "short" distance from top to bottom may promote more efficient communication among personnel.

2.70 Internal communication

The organization's channels of communication should ensure the sharing of information throughout the organization.

Proper internal organizational communication is essential for effective management, coordination of organizational functions, and planning and implementation of services.

Staff members at all levels should be able to both give and receive information that is accurate and relevant to the work they do.

Periodically, the organization should evaluate the reporting channels of its administrative, supervisory, and frontline staff members to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of communication.

2.71 Development and implementation of policies and procedures

The organization should have written statements of policies and procedures that encompass the services it offers, its intake process, its relationships with other organizations and agencies (including coordination, collaboration, and cooperative services), its personnel practices (including employee personnel files and position classifications), and its financing.

The organization's policies and procedures should be developed by the CEO with input by the governing body and appropriate staff members, volunteers, and consumers.

The organization's policies and procedures should be consistent with all relevant laws.

The organization's policies and procedures should be set forth in writing in manuals that are made available to the governing body, staff members, consumers, funders, and other interested persons.

The organization's policies and procedures should be reviewed by the CEO and governing body and updated as needed.

The implementation of policies and procedures is the responsibility of the CEO. [2.61]

2.72 Conflict of interest

Employees, agents of the organization, volunteers, or consultants should not use their relationship with the organization for personal gain, nor should there be even the appearance of a conflict of interest.

The organization must have a written policy that prohibits the acceptance of payment or any other consideration from another provider of services for referring applicants or clients to that provider, and that prohibits payment or other consideration for referrals to the organization.

The organization must have a written policy that prohibits the steering or directing of referrals of its applicants or clients to a private practice in which the organization's professional personnel or consultants may be engaged. Such a policy should preclude the transfer of the organization's cases to workers leaving the organization for private practice.

Professional workers in private practice on the organization's premises must furnish their clients with a clear, written statement that the clients receiving that worker's professional services are not the clients of the organization. The organization that rents or otherwise allows the use by others of its facilities, or of facilities contiguous to it or used part of the time by its personnel, must inform the users of the space of their obligation to maintain the facilities, supplies, and medications in a manner that is without hazard to clients and/or liability to the organization.

2.73 Client confidentiality

The organization should maintain appropriate policies on client confidentiality in accordance with federal, state/provincial, and local legal and regulatory requirements and with the ethics of the social work profession.* All such policies should be subject to continuing review, and should be adhered to by all staff members, volunteers, and members of the governing body.

All information concerning clients, whether in the form of paper records, videotape, audiotape, computer tape/disks, microfilm, photographs, or other means of information storage, must be treated as confidential.

Information concerning clients should be given to other organizations and individuals only with the written authorization of the clients, or when the organization is ordered to do so by the proper court or authorized regulatory organization, or is required to do so by law.

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* R. L. Barker, NASW Code of Ethics, in *The Social Work Dictionary* (3rd ed.) (Washington, DC: NASW Press, 1995), pp. 431–437.

The organization should seek the advice of legal counsel when special or unusual information about an individual client is sought by the courts, public officials, investigative units, or law enforcement bodies.

If a client chooses to provide confidential case information to the public through the mass media, the client gives up his or her right to the confidentiality of such information. Organizations should develop appropriate media strategies to respond to these situations, but should remain cognizant of liability considerations.

The policies and procedures of the organization should provide the opportunity for a client to review his or her case record, except where prohibited by law. The review should be carried out in a manner that protects the confidentiality of other family members or individuals whose contacts may also be contained in the record.

The organization should develop written policies and procedures concerning the involvement of parents or guardians during the time a minor child is receiving services from the organization.

Adolescents should be allowed the right to preserve the confidential nature of their own case records within the limits of existing laws and regulations.

2.74 Personnel and organizational confidentiality

The organization's confidentiality policies and procedures should delegate to the CEO the responsibility for ensuring the protection of all sensitive information, including, but not limited to, its governing body minutes, the records of its personnel, the records of its clients, internal and external communications, and written documents.

2.75 Use of technology

The organization should use the most appropriate, cost-efficient, state-of-the-art proven technology and innovations to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of its operations.

The CEO and the governing body should make certain that sufficient resources are available to obtain and implement technological changes that can improve the efficiency of the organization.

The CEO should ensure that organizational and client confidentiality is maintained in accessing all forms of technology. [2.73]

2.76 Management information systems

The organization should have a management information system (MIS) for gathering and analyzing data related to strategic planning, quality improvement, and the evaluation of governance, operations, and program services.

The features of the MIS will be determined by the organization's mission, needs, community, and funders.

The information contained in the MIS should be defined in terms of purpose (e.g., administration, quality improvement, community interpretation, research), should be obtained systematically, and should be maintained in an accurate and retrievable form. In general, the information contained in the MIS should be used for

- planning future operations and services;
- identifying recurring issues and unmet needs;
- cost accounting to provide a basis for accountability to the community and funders concerning the expenditure of funds;
- evaluating the outcome and effectiveness of organization services;
- quality improvement processes; and
- interpreting the nature of the services provided and how the funds are used.

The MIS chosen should reflect adherence to all legal requirements, professional ethics, and the rights of individuals. All information in the MIS, including its access and use, should be subject to the same standards and principles of confidentiality as outlined in other sections of this document. [2.73, 2.75]

2.77 Quality improvement process

The organization should implement and incorporate throughout itself a process for monitoring the quality of its performance that is outcome based and centered on the child's well-being and stability; the physical, emotional, and developmental status of the child; and the achievement of permanence for the child.

Incorporating a quality improvement process throughout the organization helps create a culture of continual improvement in the quality of the organization's services.

The organization's quality improvement process should include

- predefined standards or benchmarks for measuring the quality of services;
- data collection instruments that capture demographic and service utilization information, and that permit tracking and monitoring of the children, the services provided and their appropriateness, the length of time the children have been in care, and postplacement services;
- review systems for monitoring the progress of children and their families; and
- a management information system with reporting capabilities and a process to periodically review data in such a way as to enhance the organization's policy and practice.

2.78 Meeting national standards of quality

The organization should review all of its functions, policies, and practices on the basis of the standards of practice established by CWLA, and in accordance with the standards established by the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children, Inc., or the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organization. [2.11, 2.16]

The multiservice organization should select the accreditation system appropriate to the service array it provides and within which the majority of its services can be accredited.

A high level of commitment to service quality should prevail, regardless of the source of funding for the service or the clients served.

Organizations should strive to demonstrate that all of their services meet the highest national standards.

2.79 Measuring service outcomes

The organization should evaluate its services at regular intervals to determine whether those services are effectively meeting the needs of children and their families.

The organization's procedures for conducting an evaluation of its services should include

- defined objectives and measurements for determining outcomes;
- data collection instruments for conducting a before-and-after examination of change;
- a plan for data analysis;
- a plan for interpreting the findings;
- a method for reporting the findings to staff members, clients, the governing body, and the community in a way that is meaningful to each group; and
- a commitment to using the findings to recommend changes in policies, programs, and practices.

Research

2.80 Sponsorship

The organization should either sponsor or collaborate with other organizations in research that increases the effectiveness of its services and that contributes to the body of knowledge in the field.

The child welfare organization is particularly well-positioned to either conduct or participate in studies that evaluate child and family service practices and policies, and the validity of the assumptions underlying those practices and policies.

2.81 Protection of clients in research studies

The organization should ensure the protection of its clients' privacy and integrity throughout all phases of any research study. [2.73]

The participation of clients in research activities should be completely voluntary. The organization should clearly inform its clients that services required by the client will be available regardless of participation or nonparticipation in a research study.

The organization should ensure that appropriate safeguards to maintain confidentiality are in place.

In follow-up studies based solely on the organization's records, where consent of the client would not ordinarily be sought, client confidentiality must still be preserved.

2.82 Research personnel

Research personnel, whether organizational staff members or outside consultants, should have the competence to conduct the proposed studies in accordance with professional research protocols and ethics.

The organization should carefully weigh the value of and limitations on using the same person as both service provider and researcher. Such dual use may adversely affect either the service or the research methodology.

In situations where research personnel have direct contact with clients, the respective roles of the service provider and researcher must be clearly defined and explained to clients.

The organization may elect to use technical research consultants to design studies for implementation by its personnel.

2.83 Resources for research

The organization should allocate resources for research projects in its annual operating plan.

The organization should seek out funds for research from private and public sources.

The organization should consider entering into collaborative funding agreements with other organizations, universities, schools of social work, and research centers.

Legal and Consulting Services

2.84 Retaining legal counsel

The organization should retain as legal counsel an appropriately trained person who is licensed to practice law in the jurisdiction in which the organization is located, and who is a member of the state or provincial bar association.

The legal counsel may be employed as a regular member of the organization's staff, on a salary retainer, or on a fee-for-service basis.

Depending on the complexities of its operations, the organization may also find it necessary to engage legal counsel from several specialty areas, such as family law, business and corporate law, contract law, labor law, medical law, human resource law, and insurance law.

The nonprofit organization should not use as its counsel a governing body member, whether on a free or a paid basis.

Typically, public organizations are required to use counsel provided by the state/provincial or county attorney. Where such services are inadequate, other arrangements should be made.

2.85 Use of consultants

The CEO and governing body should implement policies that will make consultant services available to staff members and members of the governing body. [3.16]

The CEO may use consultants on a broad range of organization operational issues.

In some situations, the governing body may need to seek consultation on governance issues or for purposes of external evaluation (e.g., fund development, financial audits).

Relationships with the Community

2.86 Cultural responsiveness

The organization's governing body, executive and management staff, direct service staff, and foster parents should be reflective of diverse populations, and should demonstrate a commitment to competence in serving those populations. [2.7, 2.37, 2.62, 3.21]

The organization should promote its presence as a participating member of the community and be responsive to the diverse culture of the population it serves.

The organization should offer all of its services without discrimination by reason of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, or handicap.

The organization should ensure that the need for its services is the primary criterion of client eligibility.

The organization should provide those services that represent client needs, not budgetary requirements.

All services provided by the organization should relate to its mission.

The organization should be prepared to accommodate the communication skills or styles of its staff members and consumers through the hiring and/or training of knowledgeable personnel.

> Use of professional interpreters can bring satisfactory results when staff members are unavailable to communicate with clients, if training and support regarding cultural sensitivity and confidentiality are provided for the interpreters.

2.87 Access to services

The organization should make its services available and accessible to all those who are eligible.

Access to services must comply with applicable federal, state/provincial, and local legal and regulatory requirements.

2.88 Advocacy in behalf of clients

The organization should engage in advocacy efforts to assure the adequate protection and care of the children and families it serves, as well as all children and their families. [1.2, 2.35]

The organization should educate the broader community about the strengths and needs of its clients and the challenges they face.

From its work with children and their families, the organization has the opportunity to gain insight into

- the need for quality treatment of children and their families;
- the nature and quality of services provided by community agencies;
- the scope and nature of problems affecting children and their families within the community;
- the demographics of the community served by the organization, including cultural and ethnic populations served, by program area; and
- the obstacles that impede the resolution of communitywide child- and family-related problems.

With this firsthand information, the organization is well-positioned to effectively communicate with other agencies or individuals about the needs and problems of children and their families, and to offer proposals and provide leadership for successfully addressing those needs.

The organization should make available adequate leadership and resources for advocacy functions.

The effectiveness of the organization's advocacy efforts should be periodically reviewed by the governing body.

2.89 Working with the community

The organization should develop relationships, collaborations, and partnerships with a broad cross section of individuals and institutions in the community, including service consumers, families, schools, religious organizations, government organizations, businesses, and others who can help improve the provision of services to children and families.

The organization should involve various segments of the community in its efforts to support the community's children and families. In turn, the organization should strive to become a vital member of the community by providing services that are relevant to the community's needs.

By working with the community or communities it serves, the organization builds the community's capacity to define its strengths and enhances its ability to address its needs.

The organization should demonstrate accountability to the community it serves by continually reviewing and evaluating its purpose, structure, functions, and practices. It should evaluate its mission and services in light of changing community needs and expanding knowledge of the child welfare field.

2.90 Leadership in community planning

The organization should offer leadership in creating collaborations and developing partnerships with neighborhoods, communities, and state/provincial entities for the purpose of coordinating, planning, expanding, reallocating, or reducing the provision of services to children and their families.

2.91 Organizational alliances

The organization should look beyond its perimeters and consider alliances with other relevant service providers as a means of more effectively and efficiently achieving its vision.

The increasing complexity of client situations and the trend by government to retreat from addressing social problems and financing social services have radically changed the environment in which child welfare organizations operate.

To most effectively achieve the organization's mission, and to ensure the survival of broad-based, customer-friendly services while deploying its resources most efficiently, the organization should explore the feasibility of alliances with other child and family service providers, substance abuse treatment providers, hospitals, and educational institutions. Innovative partnerships, collaborations, and coalitions should all be considered.

- *Partnerships* involve the sharing of administrative functions such as fundraising, accounting, common purchasing, or the purchase of health care plans.
- *Collaborations* involve the development of joint service programs wherein staff members from each organization function as a unit under shared supervision.
- *Coalitions* are formed for advocacy purposes, so that the constituents of many organizations can increase their focused impact on public social policy.

Both vertical and horizontal alliances should be explored for their potential to improve efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.

2.92 Mergers and acquisitions

The organization should consider potential mergers and/or acquisitions as a strategy to assist it in achieving its vision, building effective community systems, and deploying community resources most effectively.

Many organizations have found mergers and/or acquisitions to be helpful when carried out for the proper reasons, such as

- obtaining a broader array of services;
- increasing the efficiency of service delivery;
- achieving cost benefits;
- using personnel effectively;
- broadening opportunities for advocacy; and
- promoting fiscal and organizational stability.

The merger and/or acquisition process is long and often difficult. Thus, it should be undertaken for cogent reasons and carried out in a carefully designed, phased manner.

2.93 Contingency planning

In the event of disaster, or of rapid or unexpected changes in funding or client populations, the nonprofit organization should use contingency planning as an opportunity to reexamine its strategic priorities, budget, and size, as well as to help reposition the organization in the changing environment in which it must reevaluate its mission.

The CEO should orient the governing body and the staff to the changes requiring adjustments and involve them in the adjustment process.

Any downsizing that may result from the implementation of a contingency plan should be managed in a manner that causes the least disruption of services to children and their families.

Opportunities for early staff retirement, provision of severance payments for long-term employees, and career counseling should be provided should downsizing prove to be necessary.

2.94 Closing the organization

The organization's bylaws and articles of incorporation should outline the provisions to be made for the payment of all organizational liabilities; the disposition of organizational records, property, and net assets; and the referral of current clients to other community agencies in the event of the organization's closing.

The CEO and other staff members should ensure that all clients and their case records are referred to appropriate organizations in a manner that best preserves service continuity.

The governing body should inform the community and all affected persons about the need to close the organization. The information provided should be honest, direct, and timely.

The closure of an organization should comply with all state/provincial statutes, regulations, and requirements, as well as professional and ethical considerations.

If it is necessary to close a program or branch office of the organization, thoughtful planning should be conducted to minimize difficulty for the clients involved, and allow the organization to meet the provisions of CWLA's standards.

3

Human Resources

Valuing Organizational Personnel

3.1 The value of human resources

The organization should treat its human resources—its staff members, foster parents, and volunteers—in a manner consistent with its mission as a human service provider.

> The success of the child welfare organization rests on the efforts of its personnel—those individuals, staff members, and volunteers who are committed to attaining the betterment of children and their families. Thus, the organization's success is dependent in large measure on the recruitment, selection, development, and retention of a competent, mission-driven, committed work force.
>
> Because the organization must be able to change and to respond with flexibility to opportunities and challenges in the environment, it should encourage its staff members to develop both professionally and personally. The organization should accept and encourage all career paths that enhance the services provided by its staff to children and their families.
>
> The organization should appropriately recognize individual achievement. Recognition may include financial compensation for staff members and other forms of compensation for volunteers. [3.32, 3.49]
>
> The organization should respond to unsatisfactory performance and should correct it with appropriate supportive or disciplinary measures.

3.2 Ethical responsibility for personnel

The organization's policies and practices should ensure that all of its staff members and volunteers are treated with dignity, respect, and common courtesy.

The ethical responsibility of the organization for all of its staff members and volunteers should be reflected in its values statement and code of ethics.

The fundamental principles of trustworthiness, honesty, loyalty, tolerance, responsibility, caring, and fairness should characterize every aspect of personnel relationships within the organization.

3.3 Primacy of the mission and shared vision

All organizational personnel should be committed first and foremost to the organizational mission and a shared vision of the organization's future.

Employee Recruitment

3.4 Recruitment strategy

The organization's personnel recruitment strategy should reflect its mission and vision, and should be oriented toward maintaining a competent, culturally diverse work force. [2.62]

The organization's staff recruitment strategy should be based upon the following premises:

- Staff member retention is the first step in staff member recruitment; thus, the organization must value and support its current personnel.
- Effective staff retention/recruitment is founded on the assignment of appropriate workloads and the provision of quality training, preparation, and supervision; adequate financial compensation; access to resources for clients; liability protection; clear performance expectations; recognition for providing quality service; positive images of the role of practitioners; role clarity; opportunities for career advancement; and participation in the decisions that affect one's work.

The organization's recruitment strategy should be comprehensive, ongoing, community-based, and culturally responsive. [3.5]

> The organization should include community representatives of the cultural and ethnic populations served by the organization in the recruitment process.

The organization's recruitment strategy should be an integral part of the organization's strategic plan. [2.9]

The organization's recruitment strategy should be guided by an assessment of current and projected client populations, the number of available practitioners, current and projected staff vacancies (based on an analysis of turnover rates), projected budget constraints or opportunities, and plans for the organization.

3.5 Cultural diversity and competence of personnel

The organization should be committed to establishing and maintaining itself as a culturally diverse and culturally competent entity. [1.6, 2.7, 2.86]

> The clients served by most child welfare organizations are culturally diverse. Many organizations predominately serve people of color and/or new immigrant populations. The organization should strive not only to hire staff members who represent the populations it serves, but also to hire staff members on the basis of their potential for working with culturally diverse populations.
>
> All personnel should understand the importance of culture and be able to work competently with the communities they serve.
>
> Quality service is enhanced when culturally diverse and culturally competent personnel can serve as role models of effective teamwork for the community.

3.6 Personnel planning process

The organization should assess its personnel needs based on its strategic and annual plans, and its anticipated staffing requirements. [2.9, 2.10]

Using a personnel planning process, the organization should specify the number and type of personnel it requires or anticipates requiring.

The organization should consider projected or planned areas of growth, as well as areas to be downsized, in planning its personnel recruitment program.

3.7 Personnel selection process

The organization should use a comprehensive personnel selection process to assure that its staff members and volunteers bring to the organization the talents, abilities, and personal commitment necessary for the organization to achieve its vision.

The candidate's potential immediate supervisor, other appropriate management or administrative staff members, and potential peers should be involved in the process of selecting new personnel.

3.8 Job descriptions

The organization should develop job descriptions that set forth the essential functions and performance standards for each staff member and volunteer position.

Each job description should set forth essential functions and performance standards that are objective *and* measurable, so that all personnel understand the criteria by which individual performance is measured, and upon which continuing employment depends.

As much as possible, the physical, emotional, and mental demands of the job should be stated.

In the United States, each job description should include a section on "Essential Functions," as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (P.L. 101–336).

Job descriptions should emphasize the flexibility and opportunities for initiative required in a given position, and the level of personal decision making that is appropriate and expected in that position.

3.9 Qualifications

Each employee of the organization should possess the competencies required of the position for which he or she is employed.

The organization's staff members may demonstrate possession of competencies for a position through a combination of the highest pertinent academic degree and increasing levels of relevant experience in child welfare or related fields.

The organization should assure that all of its personnel have the personal characteristics and commitment necessary to enhance the organization's mission.

3.10 Personnel selection interviews

The organization should establish a structure for its personnel selection interviews to ensure the consistent and fair assessment of each candidate's competencies.

During the interview process, the organization should provide candidates with information about the organization's mission, structure, and services, as well as the performance expectations of the position.

Employee salary, benefits, supervision, work responsibilities, and career ladder opportunities should be discussed during the final interview.

The organization should verify the candidate's degrees and other credentials (i.e., licenses, certifications, registrations), obtain references from former employers, and carry out required clearances (i.e., fingerprinting, screening for criminal background or child abuse and neglect). [3.12]

In those jurisdictions where laws prevent access to information on a candidate's background, the organization should advocate for change in such laws.

3.11 Employee personnel files

The organization should maintain for each employee an employee personnel file that documents the employee's credentials, competence, and performance in an objective and factual manner. [3.13, 3.42]

Employee personnel files are an important part of the organization's documentation of its service quality. These files may influence the outcome of accreditation reviews, and the receipt of licenses and contracts. Properly maintained files serve to validate the work of the organization.

The structural content of the employee personnel files should lend itself to documenting the criteria for the selection, hiring, or termination of employment of the organization's personnel.

Employee personnel files should document the occurrence and outcomes of performance and salary reviews.

Policies regarding employees' access and input to personnel files should be set forth in writing and should include the right to receive copies of each evaluation in the file.

3.12 Obtaining and verifying references

The organization should obtain at least three references for each applicant being given serious consideration and should make reasonable efforts to verify those references.

One of the applicant's three references should be from his or her present or most recent employer.

Requests for references should be accompanied by a release form signed by the potential employee.

All references should be as complete as possible to protect the organization, as well as to promote the quality of its child welfare services.

When verification of references is not possible due to factors beyond the control of the requesting organization, documentation in the employee's personnel file should be made, with reasons for the lack of verification provided, if known.

3.13 Letter of employment

The organization should provide a written letter of employment to each new staff member that states the staff member's job title, hours of work, work site, beginning salary, eligibility for benefits, performance review schedule, and supervisor's name.

A signature of acceptance by the new employee should be obtained on the letter of employment.

If the new employee is to serve "at will," appropriate language should be used in the letter so that the offer is not misconstrued as creating a contract.

The organization should attach a copy of the job description to the letter of employment.

A copy of the letter of employment should be maintained in the employee's personnel file. [3.11]

3.14 Probationary employment period

The organization should establish an initial employment period during which the employee's performance is closely evaluated and the employee can determine his or her suitability for the position.

The length of the probationary employment period should be consistent for all employees within a given type of position.

During the probationary period, both the employer and employee should be able to terminate employment without notice and without cause.

3.15 Compliance with federal, state/provincial, and local laws and regulations

The organization's personnel selection and hiring processes should comply fully with all federal, state/provincial, and local laws and regulations.

3.16 Use of consultants and contract employees

The organization should have formal written agreements with any specialized consultants or contract employees. [2.85, 4.22]

Consultants or contract employees may provide services as needed or on a regular basis. They may be used when specialized expertise is needed, when a position does not demand a full-time presence, or for the convenience of the organization.

When appropriate, the organization should provide consultants and contract employees with the same orientation program and inservice training on the organization's values, goals, mission, service delivery, service programs, and so forth, as it does for its other personnel. [3.17]

The organization should be aware of and in compliance with Internal Revenue Service guidelines for contract workers (hours worked, work site, responsibility, authority, and autonomy). If the contract worker is self-employed, the organization should provide the worker and the Internal Revenue Service with any required documentation.

The qualifications of any individual or consultant from whom the organization is purchasing services should meet the regulatory standards for that particular profession.

Employee Development

3.17 Orientation period and program

The organization should provide both a program and a period of orientation that enables all new employees to obtain a comprehensive view of and explore their own compatibility with the organization.

The orientation program should include an overview of the organization's mission and services, financial position, values and vision, position within the service community and the community at large, and personnel policies and practices.

The orientation program should provide information on the organization's policies, team aspects of its service delivery, ethics, internal communications, confidentiality requirements (agency, regulatory, and legal) and various emergency procedures.

3.18 Organizationwide staff development and training plan

The organization should create a staff development and training plan that focuses on the general needs of the organization, as well as on the individual training goals of each of its staff members.

> The organizationwide staff development and training plan should be based upon an assessment of the competency needs of all of the organization's staff members and volunteers, on the identification by management of those needs not known by staff members, and on consultation with experts who can identify trends in the field not known to the organization.
>
> The organizationwide staff development and training plan should be a composite of individual staff development plans [3.19], and should encompass orientation [3.17], inservice training [3.20], credentialing [3.22], and relationships with academia [3.23].

3.19 Individual staff development and training plans

The organization should create individualized staff development and training plans to guide the professional growth of each employee.

> The individual staff development and training plan should be based on both the individual's and the organization's needs. It should be a part of each individual's performance review. [3.26] A written copy should be placed in each individual's personnel file. [3.11]
>
> The individual staff development and training plan should include the individual's educational and knowledge needs, assessments of the individual's talents, the individual's job description and its requirements, a projected timeline for the accomplishment of the plan's goals, supports to be provided to the individual by the organization, and any reciprocal commitments by the individual to the organization.

The individual staff development and training plan should be used as an ongoing supervisory instrument to assist employees in staying on target and achieving their professional goals.

Individual staff development and training plans should be consistent with the organization's short- and long-term planning, with due consideration of budgetary ramifications.

3.20 Inservice training

The organization should provide ongoing inservice training for all of its staff members and volunteers, based upon the needs identified in its organizational and individual staff development and training plans.

The inservice training program should focus on the improvement of the practice competence of staff members, volunteer leaders, and volunteer service providers, and should encompass skill development and cognitive, attitudinal, and values development for all staff members and volunteers.

The inservice training program should help personnel maintain and expand the knowledge and skills they need to fulfill their individual responsibilities.

Staff members and volunteers should help identify the content of the inservice training that will be most useful to their continued development.

Information on the inservice training program should be contained in each individual staff development and training plan. [3.19]

3.21 Cultural competence training

The organization should periodically provide training to increase awareness, knowledge, and skill development in cultural issues for all levels of its personnel. [2.7, 2.86]

Cultural competence training can improve the quality of service provided, and increase the responsiveness of the organization's staff and volunteers to the communities served.

Cultural competence training should help staff members to

- understand how culture helps to form the beliefs and attitudes of the child's family;
- respond respectfully and effectively to children and their families of cultures different from those of the staff members;
- develop self-esteem in clients by promoting the client's sense of culture and self; and
- understand the importance of seeking support, as necessary, from community members in addressing children's cultural concerns.

3.22 Credentialing and licensing

The organization should support its personnel by providing opportunities for staff members to meet credentialing, certification, and/or licensing requirements.

In some jurisdictions, laws and regulations require the organization's service providers to be credentialed, certified, and/or licensed in specific aspects of certain services (i.e., HIV/AIDS training and Occupational Health and Safety Administration Bloodborne Pathogens guidelines).

Some jurisdictions require official review and approval of the organization's inservice training curriculum if it is to be used for certification purposes. The organization may also need to attest that participants have attended the required hours of appropriate training.

Organizations may find it easiest to meet these requirements by obtaining the services of an approved trainer in the subject, or by having a staff member certified and approved as a trainer.

3.23 Relationships with academia

The organization should enter into partnerships with institutions of higher learning to improve the quality of service in the community.

The organization should provide opportunities for on-site education and experiential training for students of institutions of higher learning.

Such opportunities are inherently beneficial to the organization in that they bring both stimulation and openness to the examination of new policies and practices.

Partnerships between the organization and relevant institutions of higher learning also afford opportunities to acquaint the schools with current trends in the child welfare field. This can be useful in assisting them to prepare their students for jobs in the field upon the completion of the course of study.

The organization should give staff members who are acknowledged leaders or skilled practitioners in management, supervision, or clinical practice the opportunity to become field practicum instructors, serve on committees, lecture at undergraduate or graduate schools, and participate in other activities that make use of their expertise and further the mission and vision of the organization.

The organization should strive to form coalitions with other human service provider organizations in ways that can provide leadership with the community's institutions of higher learning to explore and define service needs of the community, and to enhance the educational content and learning objectives for students.

3.24 Internships, practicums, and work-study opportunities

The organization should provide internships, practicums, and work-study opportunities for students of higher learning.

Internships, practicums, and work-study opportunities are a principal way to expose many students to the field of child welfare.

Many organizations report great satisfaction with their ability to select and train professionals for eventual full-time employment by becoming acquainted with them first in these ways.

3.25 Supervision

The organization's philosophy and practice of supervision should enable and support staff members and volunteers at all levels to achieve the highest quality of service to children and their families, and aid the organization in fulfilling its mission, purpose, and goals.

The organization should have written policies to guide supervisors in their supervisory practice.

The supervisor should provide support to those being supervised at the point of the supervisee's responsibility.

The supervisor should explain to new supervisees that it is the supervisor's task to help the supervisees work well.

The supervisor should ask supervisees what would be most helpful to them in doing their work.

The supervisor should provide written materials on procedures or other organizational matters, teach new skills, and impart knowledge on coping with stressful or complex clients and decision making.

The organization's supervisory responsibilities include the promotion of individualization, a focus on employee strengths, the development of mutual expectations, and a commitment to support supervisors and supervisees in the conduct of their work.

Organizational support of staff members and volunteers should include regular supervisory discussions, inservice training, and opportunities to attend workshops, conferences, and formal education.

The organization should use its staff development plan as a vehicle for discussion and should measure the progress being made toward the goals in the plan.

The organization should carefully select and train its supervisors in the techniques and skills necessary for quality supervision.

The organization should identify staff members who have supervisory talent and work to develop their skills.

3.26 Performance review

The organization should have a system for reviewing its employees' performance.

The organization's review of its employees' performance should not be a single annual event, but an ongoing process that includes an objective analysis of both the quality and the quantity of work performed, including a review of each individual's personal development plan and progress made by that individual toward reaching the goals in that plan.

The review should include a description of the productivity expectations set previously by the supervisor and employee, measurement of the employee's achievement of those expectations, and measurement of the employee's contribution to the organization's quantifiable objectives within the organization's annual plan.

In undertaking the review, the organization's management should stress that it is the performance of the employee that is being evaluated, not the employee. To this end, specific behavioral performance indicators, or "performance standards," should be used to help an employee and supervisor work together in determining criteria indicative of successful performance (i.e., achieving a given percentage of clients' permanency goals within the planned timetable).

The performance review process should include the following elements:

- *Performance Standards*

  Supervisors and the organization's management should develop clear behavioral statements of performance for each job classification, and should distribute these to prospective employees before making employment decisions. [3.8] Such standards should form the basis of the regular performance reviews between the employee and the supervisor.

- *Participatory Goal Setting*

  The supervisor and the employee should jointly develop measurable, quantifiable, objectives.

    The objectives may include monthly, quarterly, or annual numerical targets.

    The objectives should be consistent with the productivity expected of the employee as her or his portion of the work involved in the organization's annual plan.

- *Coaching Plan*

  An annual coaching plan should be established as a means of incorporating the supervisor's support in furthering the employee's professional development.

Staff Retention

3.27 Creating a healthy, supportive work environment

The organization should create a healthy, supportive work environment for all of its personnel.

A healthy, supportive work environment helps prevent worker burnout and turnover, and increases job productivity and satisfaction.

In creating a healthy, supportive work environment, the organization should consider the inclusion of such features as flexible work hours, staff training, and staff participation in decision making.

3.28 Employee involvement in decision making

The organization should provide opportunities for its staff members to consult with and advise management regarding its policies, procedures, and practices.

Highly motivated personnel thrive in an environment in which they are involved in discussions of management decisions prior to the establishment of policy. The organization's supervisors should promote an atmosphere where employees are included in decision making.

3.29 Salary and wage scales

The organization should establish salary and wage scales for each position and review those scales annually in light of cost-of-living indices and current market conditions.

The nonprofit organization's annual salary and wage review should be a part of its budget process. It should consider

- the availability of funds;
- the value of a particular position classification to the organization;

- comparisons with other organizations in the child welfare field; and
- the cost of staff member replacement.

In public organizations, the annual salary and wage review, and the adjustment of salaries, should be determined for each class of position by the applicable government entity.

3.30 Compensation

The organization should design and implement a personnel compensation plan that is fair and comprehensive, and that provides adequate and appropriate remuneration for work performed.

Compensation for individuals and teams should be in the form of payment in return for a defined baseline of work to be performed.

Compensation may also include merit raises, bonuses, career ladder increments, differentials for objective attainment, cost-of-living adjustments, and a variety of additional benefits based upon a quality standard of performance beyond the established baseline.

The organization should seek to obtain the resources necessary to offer a level of compensation to its personnel that enables them to maintain standards of living comparable to that received by other professionals in the community.

The organization should strive to offer the highest compensation possible as a means of employing and retaining the most talented and productive personnel.

The organization should help the community to understand the value of child welfare work to the community's members, and to recognize that the retention of quality personnel is tied to the excellence of their compensation.

3.31 Benefits

As part of its total compensation package, the organization should provide the highest employee benefits possible.

Because of the stressful nature of child welfare work, the organization should consider providing an employee assistance plan for its employees.

The organization should consider providing a flexible benefit (or "cafeteria style") plan in which a number of benefit options are offered to personnel within a maximum employer dollar contribution. A flexible benefit plan allows employees to craft a benefit package that is best suited to their individual circumstances, and to supplement such benefits, if they wish, through their own financial participation (usually on a pretax basis).

3.32 Recognition of personnel

The organization should encourage employees, individually or in groups or teams, to perform at the highest level by establishing ways to celebrate excellent performance and achievement.

The organization may measure excellence through client or customer surveys, peer reviews, and/or supervisory recommendations.

Personnel recognition may take various forms, such as letters from the CEO and governing body, prizes and awards, employee celebration days, and media announcements.

Recognition of excellence in performance and achievement should come from management as well as peers.

3.33 Promoting careers in the child welfare field

The organization should demonstrate a commitment to the promotion of careers in child welfare.

The organization has an obligation to create a talent pool for the future of the field through the use of appropriate public relations (e.g., organizational newsletters, providing speakers at meetings, making presentations at "career days").

All child welfare organizations should seek to attract the best and the brightest young people to the child welfare field.

Policies and Procedures

3.34 Establishment of personnel policies and procedures

The organization's governing body should establish clear and equitable personnel policies that reflect the values, mission, and vision of the organization, and that conform to applicable federal, state/provincial, and local laws and regulations.

The organization should invite staff members to participate in the development of personnel policies, and in the periodic review and modification of those policies.

All personnel should be asked to make recommendations, and staff representatives should be invited to meet with the CEO and designated members of the governing body, in developing proposed personnel policies for the approval of the entire governing body.

Personnel policies must conform fully to applicable federal, state/provincial, and local laws and regulations.

All personnel policies should be reviewed periodically by legal counsel specializing in labor law to insure their continued conformity with such laws and regulations.

Proposed changes in personnel policies should be subject to review by legal counsel prior to their adoption.

3.35 Implementation of personnel policies and procedures

The organization's CEO is responsible for the implementation of the organization's personnel policies and the development of procedures for their implementation.

The public organization should administer its personnel policies and practices within the scope of all applicable governmental rules and regulations that govern public employees in that jurisdiction.

3.36 Manual of personnel policies

The organization should develop a personnel policy manual and distribute it to all staff members.

The organization's personnel policy manual should include

- the organization's values and mission;
- the organization's code of ethics;
- the organization's code of personal and professional conduct;
- federal and state/provincial standards on equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination;
- confidentiality policies for clients and employees;

- personnel record policies, including both contents and access;
- policies concerning misconduct on the part of personnel;
- the organizational chart;
- policies and procedures regarding hiring and promotion of employees, and salary review;
- the benefits program, including leave time (sick leave, vacation time, family emergency leave);
- performance review procedures;
- grievance procedures; and
- grounds for termination of employment.

Included in the manual's discussion of the organization's values and mission should be a brief description of its current services and programs.

Every new employee should receive a copy of the personnel policies manual and have an opportunity to discuss it during the orientation program. [3.17] All personnel should attest, in writing, to their receipt of the manual and their understanding of its contents. The signed document should be returned and kept in the employee's personnel file.

Changes in personnel policies should be explained to the staff both orally and in writing, as they occur.

Personnel policy manuals are the property of the organization. They should be returned by the employee to the organization at the termination of employment.

3.37 Allegations of misconduct made against organizational personnel

The organization's personnel manual should set forth its policies and procedures concerning allegations of misconduct made against staff members and the consequences of such allegations to the employee so accused. [4.5]

The organization's personnel manual should address such behaviors by employees as abuse of clients, sexual harassment, theft, substance abuse, or violence against other personnel.

3.38 Response to allegations of misconduct by organizational personnel

The organization should respond immediately and thoroughly to all reports of misconduct made against its staff members and should take action consistent with the allegations made, jurisdictional reporting requirements, the assessment of risk to clients, and the findings of appropriate investigations. [4.5]

The organization should cooperate with the appropriate jurisdictional authorities and take care not to impede the completion of an investigation by those authorities.

The organization should include in its orientation and inservice training for both staff members and volunteers a discussion of its written policies on all forms of misconduct by its personnel and the consequences of such misconduct.

Any staff member accused of abuse/neglect of clients should be removed from direct service and placed in another job, or suspended with or without pay (as the situation warrants), until both the internal and external investigations are completed.

All staff members should keep confidential any allegation and investigation of misconduct by a staff member, informing others only on a "need-to-know" basis.

If an allegation of staff misconduct is substantiated, the organization should handle the situation on an individual basis in compliance with any existing statutes and organization policies.

The organization should establish a policy of recommending the revocation of a staff member's license or certification if revocation is found to be warranted as a result of the investigations.

In any allegation of misconduct made against a staff member, the organization should treat all parties sensitively. Public announcements or expressions of opinion that are inaccurate can damage the future of the alleged victim, the accused staff member, and the organization.

Although the protection of children must be the first rule of practice, the impact of misconduct allegations on the entire organization should not be overlooked. The CEO should anticipate and manage the emotional reactions that may be evident among all personnel during investigations.

The chairperson of the governing body should be apprised of all allegations of misconduct made against staff members.

3.39 Disciplinary policies and procedures

The organization should have disciplinary policies and procedures designed to lead to improvements in employee performance or to employment termination, for use in circumstances where employee behavior or performance has been found to be unacceptable.

The organization should identify in its personnel manual those actions that serve as grounds for immediate dismissal.

3.40 Personnel grievance procedure

The organization's personnel manual should include policies and procedures that set forth personnel grievance and appeal procedures.

The organization's grievance policies should provide for a series of reviews, the last of which should be by the CEO. The policies should designate the party (or parties) to perform the reviews, and the timelines between each step.

3.41 Exit interview

The organization should provide each departing employee with an opportunity to participate in an exit interview.

Valuable information, gained through the use of open-ended questions, especially in the aggregate and over a period of time, can be useful in reviewing and modifying the policies and practices of the organization. Exit interviews should be conducted by someone other than the departing employee's immediate past supervisor.

Exit interviews should be offered to all departing employees, whether those departures are voluntary or involuntary.

3.42 Final evaluation

When an employee leaves the organization, a final or termination evaluation should be added to the personnel file. [3.11]

The final evaluation should be structured to allow its use in the future as reference material as the need arises.

The final evaluation should contain a signed statement by the employee as to his or her understanding of the purpose of the final evaluation and agreement to it.

3.43 Providing references

The organization should fulfill requests for references on present or former employees only if the person for whom the reference was requested has signed a release authorizing such action.

Volunteers

3.44 Role of volunteers

The organization should use volunteers to enrich its services, deepen its roots in the community, and obtain additional talents that can expand its capacity to provide effective services.

The decision to establish a volunteer program should be reached only after the organization has defined the benefits that volunteers can provide.

The decision to establish a volunteer program requires a commitment by the organization to support such a program.

3.45 Policies and procedures for volunteer program

The organization should establish policies and procedures to guide the operations of its volunteer program.

The policies and procedures of the volunteer program should include

- a clear description of the program's purposes and goals;
- a clear job description for the paid staff director of volunteers and for each category of volunteers [3.48];

- a clear differentiation of functions and activities appropriate for paid staff members and for volunteers in policymaking, advocacy, administrative, and direct service roles;
- a plan for recruiting a variety of volunteers consistent with the activities to be undertaken;
- a process for assessing and selecting volunteers similar to that used for paid staff members;
- a defined line of supervision with clearly written expectations and responsibilities of the supervisor and the volunteers;
- orientation and inservice training regarding the volunteers' roles in the organization's values, mission, goals, policies, and activities;
- procedures for monitoring and evaluating the volunteers' activities and contributions;
- procedures for observing the organization's policies regarding ethics and confidentiality;
- procedures for reimbursement of travel and other expenses; and
- techniques for the constructive handling of conflicts involving paid staff members and volunteers.

3.46 Recruitment and selection of volunteers

Volunteers who have direct contact with the organization's clients should undergo the same screening procedures required of paid staff members, including background checks and reference verification. [3.10, 3.12]

The recruitment and selection of volunteers should be designed to attract a broad spectrum of people who would bring varied talents to the organization.

3.47 Orientation, training, and supervision of volunteers

The organization should provide its volunteer staff members with orientation, training, supervision, and support.

The organization's orientation and training for volunteers should include a discussion of the organization's mission, principles, and goals; professional ethics and confidentiality; and the knowledge required to accomplish assigned responsibilities.

Records of training, service information, and recognition should be maintained in each volunteer's personnel file.

A volunteer handbook, comparable to a personnel policy manual, should provide information on the organization, task descriptions for volunteers having direct contact with clients, and organizational policies and procedures applicable to volunteers.

Volunteers should receive regular supervision to help them increase the quality of their performance, and to assist them in interpreting the organization's mission and their individual contribution to it. The supervisor should assist the volunteers by periodically reviewing their accomplishments and growth.

3.48 Administration of the volunteer program

A paid staff member responsible directly to a member of the organization's management should administer the volunteer program.

The staff member responsible for administering the volunteer program should have appropriate training and experience in human resource development and in creating effective staff-volunteer partnerships.

To use their abilities most effectively, each volunteer should be provided with

- a position that best suits his or her individual skills, knowledge, and interests;
- training to supplement his or her individual knowledge and skills;
- sufficient space and equipment to function efficiently;
- a volunteer coordinator who can provide information and assistance;
- a direct supervisor who can provide specific job training, support, and direction;

- a periodic review of accomplishments;
- growth opportunities when ready for additional responsibilities;
- records to validate service and training;
- recognition; and
- access to the organization's policy development process to help policymakers focus on priority needs.

Incorporating volunteers into the organizational structure gives emphasis to a team concept of service delivery.

3.49 Recognition of volunteers

The organization should recognize its volunteers for their enhancement of the lives of children and their families. [3.1]

Volunteer recognition may take various forms, such as letters from the CEO and governing body, prizes and awards, volunteer celebration days, and media announcements.

Recognition of excellence in performance and achievement should come from management as well as peers.

4

Business Management, Marketing, and Resource Development

Business Management

4.1 The business aspects of child welfare

The organization's operations should incorporate up-to-date business and entrepreneurial practices that enhance the organization's effectiveness and efficiency. [1.8]

Traditional funding patterns for child welfare services are changing and new financing mechanisms are forming.

The nonprofit organization must adopt creative, remodeled, and increasingly sophisticated fiscal practices and fund development techniques if broad-based, child-centered, family-focused services are to survive and flourish in the coming years.

The public organization should develop creative approaches to resource development and innovative service delivery models, and should constantly advocate for adequate resources to meet the needs of its mandated constituents through grants, third-party reimbursements, maximum federal financial participation, and private funding.

4.2 Cost-effectiveness

The organization should base its cost-effectiveness measures on both financial and mission-driven considerations and should be able to demonstrate the cost-effectiveness of the services it provides.

> Service delivery systems should be continually improved and expanded in response to new needs and emerging financial realities.
>
> Adequate resources should be devoted to program evaluation and quality assurance.
>
> The organization's success should be measured by the degree to which it accomplishes its mission.
>
> > Measures of the success of the organization's mission are different from those used by the for-profit world. Success should be measured by the degree to which the organization accomplishes its mission, not by net income, return on investment, or earnings per share.
>
> As much of the organization's resources as possible should be dedicated to directly serving the needs of people at the highest level of quality. [2.17]
>
> Appropriate administrative supports are crucial to ensure effective service delivery. The organization concerned with cost-effectiveness should coordinate its intraorganization services, collaborate with other service providers, use volunteers, and advocate for improved client services.

4.3 Financial management

The organization, whether nonprofit or public, should employ a staff with sufficient expertise to manage its resources efficiently and should have in place a financial management system that includes defined responsibilities and authority for both short- and long-term resource management.

> The organization should have a fiscal department or unit dedicated entirely to financial management.
>
> The organization should develop a management information system (MIS) and administrative policies and practices that ensure accurate and timely financial reporting, annual auditing, and internal checks and balances. [2.76]

Responsibility for the organization's fiscal affairs rests with the organization's CEO, who, in turn, is accountable to the governing body. [2.58]

The organization should develop protocols that establish lines of fiscal authority and responsibility so the CEO can ensure fiscal integrity. The protocols should meet generally accepted financial guidelines to ensure that the organization's financial matters are conducted in an efficient and professional manner. [4.20]

The organization should recruit members for its governing body who have business and financial expertise. It should also establish a committee of the governing body with sole responsibility for fiscal oversight of the organization.

4.4 Investment management

Asset investment decisions should be vested in the organization's governing body.

When applicable, the organization's governing body should enlist outside expertise to augment its investment decisions, protect against liability, and ensure effective portfolio management.

The organization's governing body should establish and periodically review a formal investment policy that addresses investment risk-management concerns.

The policy should articulate the level of risk that the organization will tolerate in investment decisions.

The policy should designate the criteria for the selection of financial advisors and institutions to be used, as well as the terms and conditions of any investment decision to be made.

4.5 Risk management

The organization should implement a risk-management program to reduce injury to its clients and organizational personnel, minimize liability, and protect and preserve its assets. [2.34, 2.59, 3.37–3.38]

In view of the emergence of the present litigious environment and the proliferation of civil suits, the organization's governing body should ensure that adequate insurance is in place to cover potential liabilities and that procedures are in place for monitoring potential and actual civil actions.

The organization should establish preventive policies and procedures to minimize the risk of negligent or willful misconduct of employees, theft and fraud, conflicts of interest, and physical injury to clients, staff members, and volunteers. [3.37–3.38]

The organization's risk-management program should be seen as a component of its quality assurance process.

The organization's risk-management program should be evaluated periodically and adjusted in response to the organization's growth and development.

4.6 Facility and equipment management

The quality and condition of the organization's facilities and equipment should reflect the importance placed by the organization on the children it serves.

All facilities and equipment should be properly maintained and appropriately updated to ensure their quality at all residences, service sites, and office complexes.

The organization should establish an ongoing equipment maintenance and safety program at all of its sites.

The organization should periodically conduct a capital improvement program to ensure that resources are available for necessary facility improvements.

4.7 Financial planning

The organization's financial planning should be both mission driven and opportunity focused, and should be conducted within the framework of the organization's strategic planning process. [2.29]

Establishing the financial plan within the framework of the strategic planning process allows the organization to position itself to take advantage of new opportunities that may present themselves in the ever-changing business climate in which the organization operates.

Opportunity-focused financial planning gives the organization the flexibility to respond to new service opportunities in a timely, precise, and efficient manner. This ability depends upon proactive strategic planning, clearly defined staff and governing body roles and responsibilities, and flexible assignment of key personnel.

The governing body, in partnership with the CEO, should assume responsibility for developing long-range financial planning policies to ensure organizational solvency, provide oversight in all financial matters, and maintain standards of accountability.

4.8 Fund management

The organization should develop a description of each of its various funds that delineates the sources and uses of each fund and states the purpose and policies that govern the sources and uses of the fund, including legal, donor, and organizational restrictions.

Descriptions should be developed for each type of fund (i.e., operating, reserve, capital, endowment, debt service, and reserve).

Prospective contributors to a particular fund should be informed of the purpose and uses of the fund.

4.9 Financing new programs and facilities

The organization's governing body should put in place an approved financial plan prior to the initiation of new programs or the acquisition or construction of new facilities by the organization.

The financial plan should include consideration of the organization's capacity to absorb start-up costs and any additional debt that may result from the proposed program or facility. The financial plan should also provide for the long-term financial support of the new effort.

4.10 Financial diversification

In accord with good business practice, the organization should enhance its financial viability and reduce its financial vulnerability by diversifying its funding base.

An organization that relies primarily on purchase-of-service contracts should have such contracts with several different buyers.

Organizational funding may comes from gift income, community sources, fees for services, government purchase-of-service contracts from a variety of public entities, third-party contracts, and foundations and philanthropies.

4.11 Purchase-of-service contracts

When negotiating government purchase-of-service contracts, the nonprofit organization should seek funding commensurate with needed and expected expenditures and the public organization should provide funding to cover the full cost of the service. [2.15]

Optimal purchase-of-service contracts can be negotiated through a partnership of mutual planning between the public organization and the nonprofit organization.

The nonprofit organization should develop a contingency funding plan in the event that public funds are reduced or eliminated.

Contingency planning requires that programs (and expenditures within programs) be reconfigured and prioritized in ways that minimize the impact of funding reductions without weakening the organization as a whole. The organization should avoid the natural tendency to cut services across the board when reductions in funding are experienced.

The nonprofit organization should negotiate prompt and timely payment clauses in all of its government purchase-of-service contracts. Such clauses should stipulate the recouping of borrowing expenses incurred by the organization when the government funder does not reimburse or renew contracts within a reasonable number of days.

4.12 Fee for service

The organization should make all reasonable efforts to obtain the financial resources necessary to serve those clients unable to pay a fee.

The organization may establish a flat fee, based on the cost of the service, that can be waived or reduced when necessary, or it may establish a sliding scale and adjust fees at intake or at a later time, based on specific criteria.

4.13 Third-party payment

The organization should seek contracts with third-party vendors, such as insurance companies or public entitlement programs.

4.14 Managed care and capitated funding

The organization should prepare itself to compete successfully in a business environment that features managed care and the use of capitated rates.

The organization with little current reliance on the federal/state resources being placed in capitated programs will be less affected by managed care systems than the organization confronting a shift from government purchase-of-service contracts to a capitated rate funding mechanism.

The organization can best prepare itself for and ensure a successful transition to a managed care/capitated funding marketplace by

- providing assured high-quality services in the most effective manner;
- serving children and their families most appropriately by making available a wide range of services;
- conducting accurate and timely initial assessments and ongoing reviews to ensure that the most appropriate level of care is being provided;
- providing both preventive and early intervention measures and services;
- making services geographically accessible, with a sufficient number of providers in a reasonable number of locations to give children and their families ready geographic access to services;
- maximizing child and family participation in the development of the service plan;

- ensuring that all services reflect the organization's commitment to multicultural sensitivity and competence;
- implementing a rapid-response intake process;
- minimizing the number of persons managing the service plan;
- ensuring confidentiality of all client information;
- using quality assurance procedures (including performance-based and satisfaction outcome measures) to influence system design and service improvement;
- establishing protections to prevent negligent treatment or inappropriate denial of care, include procedures for resolving client appeals of the organization's decisions; and
- determining the cost of changes by computing the upfront capitalization costs of those changes (e.g., new CQI/MIS/marketing) and by developing a three-year business plan.

When negotiating with managed care organizations, the organization should consider increasing the number of clients in the pool to be served; not restricting the pool to all high-risk clients; and asking for increased capitation rates (dollars per capita) if the pool includes only high-risk (and therefore high-cost) children and families.

4.15 Consultation fees

The organization responding to other organizations' requests for consultation should formulate a consultant fee structure for its services based upon the cost of the services and the ability of the receiver to pay.

4.16 Creating a for-profit business

The nonprofit organization considering the creation of a for-profit business should incorporate the for-profit business as a for-profit subsidiary of the nonprofit parent corporation, with separate accounting procedures that conform with federal and state/provincial tax code requirements and reporting regulations, and should take care not to jeopardize its tax exempt status in managing unrelated business income.

The for-profit business should be established to help the nonprofit organization further its mission and achieve its shared vision of the future.

The organization considering a for-profit business should first conduct a feasibility study and prepare a business plan. The for-profit business should be established only if such a study concludes that sufficient capital, expertise, and marketability exist to assure reasonable success.

The governing body for the subsidiary for-profit corporation should be appointed by the parent nonprofit organization to provide sufficient oversight of the performance and viability of the enterprise. Regular reports should be made to the parent organization.

Any and all profits from the for-profit enterprise should be directed to furthering the nonprofit purposes of the organization.

4.17 The annual budget

The organization should have an annual budget that allocates its resources in accordance with its mission, strategic plan, and annual operating plan. [2.30]

Both public and nonprofit organizations should prepare an annual budget in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FAST) in the United States, the Handbook of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA) in Canada, or other relevant body of standards. [4.20]

The organization's budget and financial statements should clearly identify costs of service.

The budget should include a statement of functional expenses by organizational programs and services.

The organization's budget estimates should realistically reflect anticipated revenues and expenses based on previous experience and/or other objective information.

The organization's annual budget should be based on a regular review of client and community needs, changes in service delivery, changes in service funding mechanisms, and available financial resources. Decisions regarding budgeting priorities should be mission driven and based on the organization's vision, goals, and annual priorities

An operating budget is not, in itself, adequate for financial planning. The CEO or CFO should also prepare a cash flow statement, a capital budget, and a balance sheet.

4.18 Annual budget development process

The organization's annual budget development process should be tied to its annual planning process, and should identify and isolate the critical choices the organization faces when operating in a climate where needs exceed resources.

The budget development process should be used to allocate the resources necessary to meet the organization's priorities in conformity with its mission, strategic plan, and annual operating plan.

The development of the budget should be a participatory process that balances meaningful input from staff members who work in each program unit with policy decisions made at the senior management and governing body levels.

The budget development process should be a clearly assigned administrative responsibility under the supervision of the CEO.

The final draft of the budget should be reviewed before implementation and approved by the organization's governing body, or, for the public organization, the appropriate government entity. [2.30]

4.19 Monitoring and implementing the annual budget

The organization's governing body should authorize the CEO to manage the approved annual budget. [2.30, 2.58]

The governing body and the CEO should develop guidelines that provide management with the budget flexibility needed to meet the organization's changing financial needs.

The governing body should review and approve any budgetary changes designated significant.

The CEO should regularly prepare budget management reports that compare actual performance to the annual budget. The governing body and management should regularly review those reports.

4.20 Fiscal management standards

The organization's processing of accounting data must adhere to generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and the Financial Accounting Standards Board Statement (FAST) in the United States, or the Handbook of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA) in Canada.

The organization should ensure that its accounting procedures are current with GAAP and FAST/CICA standards and are reviewed annually with independent professional accountants. [4.24]

Money management practices of the public organization should be measured by their compliance with financial procedures and standards set by federal, state/provincial, or local policies and regulations, and CWLA standards.

4.21 Accounting and administrative procedures

The organization's internal accounting controls and administrative procedures should be reviewed periodically, set forth in a manual, and modified in response to the changing character of the organization and its environment.

The organization's internal accounting controls should encompass control areas such as receipt of cash; billing; accounts receivable and accounts payable; disbursement of cash; payroll; purchasing; fixed assets; petty cash; contributions; grants, gifts, and bequests to the organization; grants and gifts awarded to others; and loans. Accounting and administrative policies should adhere to all relevant federal, state/provincial, and local laws.

4.22 Nonprofit organization criteria for contracting

All contracts entered into by the organization should specify the scope of activity, terms, termination, and price; legal counsel should review all major contracts prior to signing to ensure the adequate protection of the organization.

The organization should implement the following practices and policies in establishing contractual relationships:

- The organization's response to requests for proposals/price quotations should be in accordance with its mission and vision, and with the highest standards of practice.
- The organization's mission statement should be broad enough to allow for sufficient flexibility and creativity in responding to contractual opportunities.
- All details, requirements, and measurable expectations in contracts should be clearly set forth and defined. [3.16]
- The organization should seek contracts and service agreements with culturally diverse groups.
- Authorization to sign contracts should be established in the organization's bylaws and regulations.
- The organization should review contracts being implemented and measure outcomes to determine whether services are still needed by clients, and whether further payments are warranted.
- The organization should follow Internal Revenue Service or Revenue Canada regulations and definitions regarding the status of consultants. [3.16]
- A competitive bid policy in regard to consultants should be used to obtain the best value for the organization.

4.23 Public organization criteria for contracting

The public organization should establish written criteria for all of its purchase-of-service contracts. The public organization's reasons for making a decision to purchase a given service should be consistent with its mission, vision, and the highest standards of practice.

To enhance the public/nonprofit organization partnership, the public organization purchase-of-service contracting process should encompass

- a written plan for the evaluation and review of contracts;
- the participation of potential contractors in the development and preparation of requests for proposals and price quotes;
- incentives for culturally and ethnically diverse contractors to apply;
- a plan for timely contracting and payment; and
- vendor performance guidelines.

The public organization's contract standards should allow for flexibility and the opportunity for respondents to use the most cost-effective, creative means of providing the purchased services.

4.24 Annual financial audit

The nonprofit organization's governing body should retain an independent certified public accountant (CPA) to conduct an annual audit of its financial practices.

The organization's annual audit should result in the generation of an opinion on the organization's financial statements, ensure that the organization's fiscal procedures conform with generally accepted accounting procedures (GAAP) and standards, and certify that all public moneys are being properly used for the purpose for which they were provided.

The organization's annual audit should follow the Financial Accounting Standards Board Statement (FAST) in the United States, or the Handbook of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA) in Canada.

After review by its audit or fiscal committee and the CEO, the organization's annual audit should be placed directly before the organization's governing body. Findings of the final audit report should be reviewed and found acceptable by a majority of the governing body.

The organization should request that the CPA or accounting firm conducting the audit prepare a letter to management (but addressed to the governing body) noting any key issues and constructive suggestions or recommendations.

- The management letter is not a public document.

Action taken, or not taken, in response to the recommendations should be reported by the CEO to the governing body.

- The organization's accepted audit is a public document and should be made available for scrutiny by the community.

The public organization's financial practices should be examined by various levels of government. Such audits should be conducted in accordance with the financial regulations of the government entities funding the organization.

Marketing

4.25 Marketing practices

The organization's marketing practices should include goal setting, promotion, and the use of the professional communications disciplines of public relations, advertising, and in-person marketing or sales.

Marketing is an activity that helps facilitate the exchange of something of value for something needed.

To practice effective marketing, the organization should define what it needs from the external environment to fulfill its mission (marketing goals), then determine who has such resources (publics), and what the organization can exchange with its publics that holds sufficient value for them (products). The organization's marketing program should identify and produce the recognition, resources, and supports necessary to carry out its mission

The effective nonprofit organization should recognize that its continued viability depends not only on its ability to do good work, but on its ability to market itself competitively as well.

4.26 Goal-driven marketing

The organization should use a goal-driven marketing approach.

A goal-driven marketing approach takes the organization out of a supplicant role and allows it to enter the market place secure in its value, and with a clear plan for how that value will be recognized and supported in the community.

Although once reluctant to embrace marketing strategies as relevant to their mission, child welfare organizations have learned to incorporate marketing practices into their operations because of the benefits such efforts bring to the organization. Marketing helps the organization to forge a sense of mutuality and partnership with its many customers (both the purchasers of the services and the clients who consume the services).

4.27 The marketing program

The organization's marketing program should be goal driven [4.25], encompass the eight key elements of successful marketing, and be evaluated annually.

The organization should conduct an annual marketing planning process wherein each unit of the organization sets marketing objectives and a plan to achieve them.

Successful marketing programs include eight key elements.*

- *Objectives*: Measurable results to be achieved.
- *Positioning*: Desired image or reputation for the organization.
- *Product*: Clearly defined programs and services that deliver the necessary benefits.
- *Publics*: Identified target groups the organization wishes to reach, including both purchasers of services and service consumers.
- *Price*: Cost of the product to the targeted groups.
- *Place*: Accessible locations where the product is readily available.
- *Production*: Ability to meet customer expectations for effective, timely service.
- *Promotion*: Effective communications that motivate target groups to respond.

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* G. J. Stern, *Marketing workbook for nonprofit organizations* (St. Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 1990).

The organization should conduct a management review of its marketing program and set priorities for its program.

The organization should use skill-building throughout its programs to assure the use of each staff member in effective marketing.

The organization should employ marketing/communications professionals, whether on staff, under contract, or both, to develop and coordinate the organization's activities.

The organization should conduct an annual results-based evaluation of its marketing program.

4.28 Promotion

As a part of its marketing program, the organization should conduct a series of promotional activities that create a clear understanding of its purposes and services, as well as the needs of the clients it serves.

The organization's promotional activities should

- be based upon the organization's actual programs and operations;
- be without deception;
- maintain dignity with respect to the style and content of presentations, so that the professional character of the promotional activities is evident;
- treat information regarding the organization's clients with confidentiality, sensitivity, and respect; and
- highlight the quality of services and their availability to all, with emphasis on responsiveness to the diverse community served.

4.29 Use of consumers in promotion activities

The organization should establish policies to assure that no child or adult is exploited by the organization for purposes of public relations, marketing, or fundraising.

The organization's promotion activities should support and sustain the organization's primary responsibility to its clients, who have an ethically and legally protected right to confidentiality.

In accordance with the highest standards of professional ethics and strict adherence to the principles of client confidentiality, the organization should ensure that the appearance of clients in the organization's public relations and fundraising activities, including events and collateral materials, be made only on the basis of informed consent and with consideration that

- the disclosures are not potentially stigmatizing and demeaning to the client, and
- a benefit accrues to the client.

The organization's informed consent policies and procedures should

- stress that client appearances in promotions are completely voluntary and that no negative repercussions will accrue should clients decline to participate;
- represent a thorough understanding of the issues and implications of such consent;
- include the client's right to review and approve, before distribution, a written transcript of audio/videotape materials representing the client's experiences, or any other types of public relations materials;
- include the signing of a release form that identifies the approved appearance (photos, case history/testimony, audio/visual recordings, event appearance) and usage (Should the client be a minor, both the client and the parent or guardian must sign the form.);
- establish the client's ability to revoke consent from any future use of the appearance in the organization's public relations materials; and
- in the case of the media, include support in the form of training and the presence of a staff member.

4.30 Relationships with the media

The organization's policies and procedures governing its contact with the media should promote the development of a positive, supportive relationship.

Because contacts with the media represent a critical opportunity to educate target audiences, the organization should use its relationship with the media to cultivate a positive public image and to deflect negative publicity.

The organization should strive to build positive relations with a variety of media sources. This is best accomplished through the development of professional relationships based on cooperation, candor, and responsiveness.

4.31 The media contact person

The organization should facilitate the establishment of positive relationships with the media by designating a primary contact person who will represent the organization in its dealings with all media.

The organization's primary media contact person should be able and readily available to assess and respond to all inquiries from the media; to select appropriate persons to respond; to provide consultation to staff members, volunteers, and clients; and to act as the primary contact for the organization regarding its work with the media.

The organization's primary media contact person should be appropriately trained for the organization to receive maximum benefit from every media opportunity.

The organization's primary media contact person should have a thorough understanding of the organization and how it operates, including an understanding of the organization's mission and vision, values, services, general finances, organizational policies and procedures, organizational ethics and culture, and confidentiality requirements.

The organization's primary media contact person should be familiar with the organization's key messages.

4.32 Crisis communications plan

The organization should have a crisis communication plan for the internal and external management of communications in response to abnormal situations of potential negative consequence, including those situations that implicate the organization or its employees, foster parents, volunteers, or consumers.

The organization's crisis communication plan should anticipate issues important to the organization and establish responses to prevent or mitigate any negative impact.

Resource Development

4.33 Strategic and annual fund development plans

The organization should create strategic and annual fund development plans designed to raise funds sufficient to meet a substantial portion of the organization's budgetary needs.

The organization's annual fund development plan should contain goals, objectives, and action steps.

The capacity of the organization, the need for funds, the availability of resources, and other external factors will influence the timing, implementation, choice of, and coordination of fundraising methods.

The organization should determine the appropriate fundraising methods to be used based on the method's costs and income-producing potential, and the degree to which the method enhances the organization's fundraising goals and public image.

In selecting various fundraising methods, the organization should consider the purpose for which the funds will be used; the appropriateness of the method to the fundraising case illustrations; the source of the funds; the organization's cash flow needs; related time, effort, and cost expenditures; scheduling; personnel requirements; and how the various fundraising methods best integrate for maximum synergy.

The organization's fundraising plans should be based on market research. Data obtained from an external assessment should guide the case illustration for support and determine the feasibility and strategic choices of individual fundraising goals and their objectives.

The organization should recognize that successful philanthropic fundraising requires at least three basic elements—targets based on the needs and goals of the organization, a competent professional development staff, and a CEO and governing body that are committed to and accept their responsibility for the fundraising program.

4.34 Role of the governing body in fundraising

The organization should establish a standing committee of its governing body to direct that body's involvement in fundraising, but the authority for the organization's overall direction and policysetting for fundraising belong to the entire governing body. [2.31, 4.35]

The CEO and senior fund development staff should be responsible for administration and implementation of the fundraising direction and policy. [4.36]

All members of the governing body should be involved in varying degrees in the organization's fundraising activities.

All members of the governing body should be expected to make their own gifts to the organization, at a level that is significant to each.

In selecting prospective members of the governing body, the organization should seek out individuals with fundraising experience and enthusiasm. Prospective members should have a willingness to give, the ability to influence others to give, and the time necessary for the work involved.

4.35 Role of the governing body's fund development committee

The organization's governing body's fund development committee should oversee the organization's fundraising program, recommend fundraising policies to the governing body, work with the CEO and development officer in planning for fundraising, and assume appropriate roles in implementing the fundraising plan. [2.31, 2.58]

The governing body's fund development committee should stipulate the board members' responsibilities for giving and for obtaining funds.

The governing body's fund development committee may include individuals who are not from the governing body, as well as those who are.

The governing body's fund development committee may have several subcommittees responsible for various fundraising entities (i.e., the annual fund, special events, major gifts, planned giving, and a capital campaign). Chairpersons of the subcommittees should be members of the fund development committee.

4.36 Role of the senior fund development staff

The senior fund development staff person should posses those leadership skills necessary to manage key fundraising functions, including the ability to analyze, plan, carry out, control, and evaluate fund development efforts.

Successful find-raising is a highly complex process requiring skilled professional management.

The senior development staff person should be capable of organizing the fundraising office, managing donor records, leading the professional and support staff, and managing volunteers and the functioning of the governing body's development committee.

4.37 Role of the fund development staff

The fund development staff should exhibit exemplary ethical standards, leadership, and professionalism; practice effective management techniques in the administration of the fundraising program; and provide information, generate ideas, offer guidance, and otherwise inspire the organization's staff members and volunteers.

4.38 Role of all staff members in fundraising

The organization's staff at all levels should actively participate in and support the organization's promotional and fund development efforts.

Staff participation is essential to the success of the organization's efforts. Such participation expands the quantity and range of community contacts and gives credibility to the organization's efforts to build relationships within the community and to obtain its vital support.

The organization should establish programs for employee-giving that offer opportunities for staff members to learn more about the organization and its work. Such programs can raise money, improve morale and productivity, and enhance the organization's ability to raise funds from other donors who are impressed with the financial commitment of the organization's staff.

4.39 Fundraising standards

The organization's fundraising program should adhere to the highest ethical standards, as defined by professionals in the field.

The development staff should exhibit and promote high ethical standards in the conduct of its work, and strive to preserve and enhance philanthropy and volunteerism.

The development staff should adhere to the Standards of Professional Practice established by the National Society of Fund Raising Executives (see Appendix).

4.40 Donor Bill of Rights

The organization should advise all donors of the Donor Bill of Rights.*

The Donor Bill of Rights sets forth the right of those contributing to an organization

- to be informed of the organization's mission, of the way the organization intends to use donated resources, and of its capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes;
- to be informed of the identity of those serving on the organization's governing board, and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities;
- to have access to the organization's most recent financial statements;

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* Developed by the American Association of Fund Raising Counsel (AAFRC), the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy (AHP), the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), and the National Society of Fund Raising Executives (NSFRE).

- to be assured that their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given;
- to receive appropriate acknowledgment and recognition;
- to be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by law;
- to expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature;
- to be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organization, or hired solicitors;
- to have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that an organization may intend to share;
- to feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful, and forthright answers.

4.41 Comprehensive fundraising program

The organization should establish a comprehensive fundraising program capable of providing support for the current and future financial needs of its programs and facilities.

The organizations's comprehensive fundraising program should include annual giving, capital giving, and planned-giving components that correlate with the following organizational needs:

- *Annual Gifts*

  Unrestricted and restricted gifts to support ongoing programs and services of the organization and to occasionally support new or special programs.
- *Capital Gifts*

  Unrestricted and restricted gifts to support the development or renovation of the physical plant, including acquisition of major equipment.

- *Endowment Gifts*

  Unrestricted and restricted gifts invested by the organization to generate income that can be used to support the organization's ongoing services and programs.

4.42 Annual gifts

The organization should establish an annual gifts program.

The annual gifts program can be used to establish a donor base for future fundraising efforts, to develop donors who will provide gifts annually, and to identify and develop future major gift prospects.

The organization's governing body fund development committee, annual fund subcommittee, and staff fund development officer should determine the solicitation strategies appropriate for the organization's annual fund campaign. Strategy selection should be based on maximizing gift support and on the availability of resources, budget, and staff to implement the strategy.

The annual gifts program may include some or all of the following strategies:

- *Direct Mail* (written requests for a gift to be returned by mail): Direct mail should be used to acquire first-time donors, or for renewing and upgrading present donors.
- *Phone Appeals* (telephone solicitations for the acquisition of new donors, and the renewal and upgrading of present donors): Phone appeals provide a more personal contact than is possible through direct mail, and may be most effective in acquiring new donors.
- *Personal Solicitation of Major Gifts* (gifts from individuals that are personally solicited by the CEO, members of the governing body, or others): The gifts are sometimes paid over a period of time, and are usually in the form of appreciated assets.
- *Grant Proposals* (annual and special project support obtained from foundations in the form of grants): Foundations may be independent, corporate sponsored, operating, or community based. Normally,

foundation funding is solicited through letters of inquiry, proposal letters, and formal proposals. The preparation of grant proposals requires extensive research, a plan for evaluating the proposal program, and a well-written proposal. Many large foundations have a particular interest in funding innovative services and programs for nonprofit organizations that have difficulty attracting project support from individuals.

- *Special Events* (used to obtain publicity, increase visibility, and raise money): Special events draw attention from the press as well as from those who attend. They are especially useful as a means of thanking donors or involving volunteers.

4.43 Capital gifts

The organization should establish a capital gifts program to raise funds for capital needs such as new building construction, existing building renovation, large technological improvements, or endowments.

A capital campaign is a highly structured fundraising program with sizable goals that requires careful and intensive preparation and organization, and high levels of attention, dedication, and commitment from members of the governing body, volunteers, and staff.

- The large goals should be used to raise donors' sights regarding the level of their gifts, both during and after such campaigns.
- Successful capital campaigns typically bring about an increase in the level of giving in subsequent annual campaigns.

Before an organization embarks on a capital fund drive, it should assess its readiness for such an intensive program by conducting an analysis or feasibility study. Both internal and external factors should be studied.

- The internal feasibility study should examine the organization's strategic plan, funding needs, the commitment of staff members and governing body leadership, past and present fundraising programs, development of prospective givers and donors, and the organization's capacity to manage a large campaign.

- The external feasibility study should evaluate the community's understanding of the organization's goals and needs, the community's awareness of the organization's public image, the community's potential for gift support as it relates to the community's needs, and the adequacy of volunteer leadership to conduct the campaign.

4.44 Evaluating the fundraising program

The organization should evaluate annually the effectiveness and efficiency of its fundraising program, and should develop a reporting process to analyze fundraising cost effectiveness by activity area and for the total program.

The demand by outside interests for fundraising cost efficiency is becoming increasingly pronounced. The general public believes that low fundraising costs indicate a well-managed organization.

The percentage of the organization's budget used for fundraising activities is at present the primary factor used by the lay public to judge the effectiveness of a nonprofit organization's fundraising efforts. It is difficult, however, to identify one universally accepted percentage figure for cost-per-dollar raised that can be used as a measure of reasonable fundraising expenses.

Multiple factors are involved in calculating fundraising costs. Individual components of the fundraising process, such as long-range investments, should be evaluated as part of the total development program, and the governing body should determine a reasonable return on investment for the organization based on previous results.

4.45 Endowment gifts

The organization should build an endowment to create financial strength, enhance long-term financial viability, afford greater capacity to meet community needs, and permit flexibility in providing services.

An endowment consists of a principal (corpus), maintained in a permanent fund, that provides an organization with income for general or restricted use.

An endowment may result from operating surpluses generated in previous years, from appreciation of endowment principal, from bequests, or from direct gifts often restricted for use as an endowment. If the endowment is established by gift, the organization must observe any donor restrictions on those funds.

4.46 Planned giving

The organization should establish a planned giving program to enhance its long-term financial viability.

Planned giving involves a current commitment to give; the gift itself, however, is not available to the organization until some point or event in the future (generally at the death of the donor).

Planned gift instruments typically include wills, charitable gift annuities, deferred payment gift annuities, pooled income funds, charitable remainder unitrusts, charitable remainder annuity trusts, retained life interest gifts, and life insurance gifts. Given the sophisticated nature of some planned-giving instruments, the organization should obtain the assistance of legal counsel in setting up such instruments whenever appropriate.

An organization that solicits or receives planned gifts should exercise good stewardship of the gifts it receives. The organization's governing body should

- clearly define, in writing, the responsibilities of the governing body, the planned gifts program, and the planned giving staff;
- establish investment standards in writing;
- state the governing body's legal responsibilities and involvement in the program;
- establish investment policies and guidelines that

identify who is making the investment decisions, prepare guidelines to direct the investment decisions, and specify whether the funds are invested for operational purposes or endowment purposes;

- establish policies regarding the management, marketing, and promotion of the planned gifts program;
- determine what types of planned gift instruments will be offered, minimum amounts that will be accepted, and rates of income that can be offered to donors; and
- identify who will be authorized to negotiate with donors, prepare statements about the avoidance of pressure tactics in gift solicitation and about the handling of confidential information, determine when life income payments will be offered, and establish how assets are to be handled at the time of final distribution.

Organizations and development officers that engage in planned giving should adhere to the Model Standards of Practice for the Charitable Gift Planner that have been established by the National Committee on Planned Giving.*

4.47 Establishing an organizational foundation

The organization should consider the advantages and disadvantages of forming its own foundation to support its fundraising efforts.

Organizational foundations are usually formed to achieve a broad participation of volunteers in the mission of the organization, to act as the philanthropic fundraising branch of the organization, and to provide financial security for the organization.

The organization choosing to create a separate foundation should do so solely to support the mission of the organization and the fulfillment of its strategic plan. The organization should set up a separate foundation as a supporting organization that qualifies as a public charity under the appropriate federal and or state/provincial tax legislation. Supporting organizations are organized and operated exclusively for the benefit of, and are controlled by, the operating organization. Legal counsel should be sought when establishing a foundation. Prudent consideration should be given to the foundation structure that is adopted.

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* Available from the National Committee on Planned Giving, 310 N. Alabama Street, Suite 210, Indianapolis, IN 46204.

The organization that elects to form a separate foundation for fundraising should observe the following considerations:

- The foundation's strategic plan for fundraising should support the organization's strategic plan, and the planning body for both organizations should include representation from each governing body.
- The foundation's strategic plan should take into account the principles of portfolio management and the guidelines of portfolio growth, as well as guidelines for distribution.
- The organization's policies for confidentiality and the use of its name should be followed by the foundation in all solicitation efforts.
- The organization's governing body should be responsible for establishing policies regarding the foundation's investment instruments and its investment philosophy.

APPENDIX

NSFRE Code of Ethical Principles and Standards of Professional Practice

Statement of Ethical Principles*

The National Society of Fund Raising Executives exists to foster the development and growth of fund-raising professionals and the profession, to preserve and enhance philanthropy and volunteerism, and to promote high ethical standards in the fund-raising profession.

To these ends, this code declares the ethical values and standards of professional practice which NSFRE members embrace and which they strive to uphold in their responsibilities for generating philanthropic support.

Members of the National Society of Fund Raising Executives are motivated by an inner drive to improve the quality of life through the causes they serve. They seek to inspire others through their own sense of dedication and high purpose. They are committed to the improvement of their professional knowledge and skills in order that their performance will better serve others. They recognize their stewardship responsibility to ensure that needed resources are vigorously and ethically sought and that the intent of the donor is honestly fulfilled. Such individuals practice their profession with integrity, honesty, truthfulness, and adherence to the absolute obligation to safeguard the public trust.

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* Adopted November 1991. Reprinted with permission of NSFRE.

Furthermore, NSFRE members

- serve the ideal of philanthropy, are committed to the preservation and enhancement of volunteerism, and hold stewardship of these concepts as the overriding principle of professional life;
- put charitable mission above personal gain, accepting compensation by salary or set fee only;
- foster cultural diversity and pluralistic values and treat all people with dignity and respect;
- affirm, through personal giving, a commitment to philanthropy and its role in society;
- adhere to the spirit as well as the letter of all applicable laws and regulations;
- bring credit to their fund-raising profession by their public demeanor;
- recognize their individual boundaries of competence and are forthcoming about their professional qualifications and credentials;
- value the privacy, freedom of choice, and interests of all those affected by their actions;
- disclose all relationships which might constitute, or appear to constitute, conflicts of interest;
- actively encourage all their colleagues to embrace and practice these ethical principles;
- adhere to the following standards of professional practice in their responsibilities for generating philanthropic support.

Standards of Professional Practice*

1. Members shall act according to the highest standards and visions of their institution, profession, and conscience.

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* Adopted and incorporated into the National Society of Fund Raising Executives (NSFRE) Code of Ethical Principles, November 1992 (amended March 1993 and October 1994). Reprinted with permission of NSFRE.

2. Members shall avoid even the appearance of any criminal offense or professional misconduct.
3. Members shall be responsible for advocating, within their own organizations, adherence to all applicable laws and regulations.
4. Members shall work for a salary or fee, not percentage-based compensation or a commission.
5. Members may accept performance-based compensation such as bonuses provided that such bonuses are in accord with prevailing practices within the members' own organizations and are not based on a percentage of philanthropic funds raised.
6. Members shall neither seek nor accept finder's fees and shall, to the best of their ability, discourage their organizations from paying such fees.
7. Members shall effectively disclose all conflicts of interest; such disclosure does not preclude or imply ethical impropriety.
8. Members shall accurately state their professional experience, qualifications, and expertise.
9. Members shall adhere to the principle that all donor and prospect information created by, or on behalf of, an institution is the property of that institution and shall not be transferred or utilized except on behalf of that institution.
10. Members shall, on a scheduled basis, give donors the opportunity to have their names removed from lists which are sold to, rented to, or exchanged with other organizations.
11. Members shall not disclose privileged information to unauthorized parties.
12. Members shall keep constituent information confidential.
13. Members shall take care to ensure that all solicitation materials are accurate and correctly reflect the organization's mission and use of solicited funds.
14. Members shall, to the best of their ability, ensure that contributions are used in accordance with donors' intentions.
15. Members shall ensure, to the best of their ability, proper stewardship of charitable contributions, including timely reporting on the use and management of funds and explicit consent by the donor before altering the conditions of a gift.

16. Members shall ensure, to the best of their ability, that donors receive informed and ethical advice about the value and tax implications of potential gifts.

17. Member's actions shall reflect concern for the interests and well-being of individuals affected by those actions. Members shall not exploit any relationship with a donor, prospect, volunteer, or employee to the benefit of the member or the member's organization.

18. In stating fund-raising results, members shall use accurate and consistent accounting methods that conform to the appropriate guidelines adopted by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA)* for the type of institution involved.

19. All of the above notwithstanding, members shall comply with all applicable local, state, provincial, and federal civil and criminal law.

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* In countries outside of the United States, comparable authority should be utilized.

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